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FOR HIS FRIENDS
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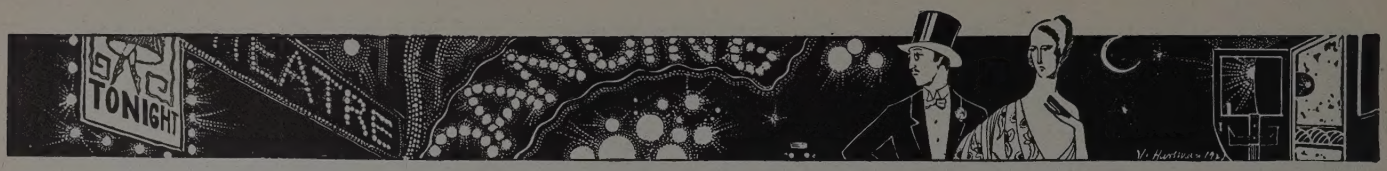

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IF YOU ARE COMING TO NEW YORK
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THE PLAY GUIDE

THE PLAY GUIDE

The Play Guide of Theatre Magazine is a guide for young and old, to America's greatest amusement center, New York City. Lest you lose yourself in the maze of good, bad and indifferent in this vast playground the Theatre Magazine offers you the clue of The Play Guide. Mark its sign-posts well! They will avoid your suffering boredom.

THE incomparable Balieff is back again with his *Chauve-Souris,* and his English (as prophesied beforehand) worse and more delightful than ever. The present version of the *Chauve-Souris* is agreed to be the best yet, and that company's popularity with the public remains. Which is a signal for a revival of interest in the Russian cabaret and restaurant. They have all taken on a fresh lease of life, and a new one has been added to the list—*Katinka,* in the Forties—which Chaliapin chose recently as the *mise en scène* for a dinner to his friends. Illesco's Katinka Orchestra, claimed to be a miniature Russian symphony, is considered particularly fine.

An amusing feature of this and several other restaurants around town concerns their exteriors rather than their interiors, which as to the Russian ones bear a certain family resemblance in decoration, food and entertainment. The exterior, or what any well-trained elevator boy calls "the main en-trínce," is embellished with a perfectly good human dressed in a costume symbolizing the nature of the place, and acting besides as a kind of proud handy man to receive guests. In front of *Katinka* he is a big Russian attired in belted blouse and astrakhan cap.

THIS idea, we were told by an Englishwoman, has been borrowed from London, where it has been in vogue some time, each so-called London club having one of these super-doormen dressed in character. Up to now the only thing of the kind we have had has been the pirates who parade the sidewalk in front of "The Pirate's Den," down in The Village. The Englishwoman insists that we are harsher to our human symbols than they are, and keep them out in the cold, whereas in London they are permitted to remain warm inside and only need come bounding down the carpet under the awning, also attendant features of all London cafés, when they hear a noise like a guest approaching. Well, we're only repeating what we were told.

The Russian restaurants up-town have what might be designated in trade terms as "class circulation." If you want Russian atmosphere more on the Bohemian or student order, there is *The Russian Bear,* down on Second Avenue above Twelfth Street. Artists and near-artists of all nationalities, people who write, and those who yearn for a good, rousing political discussion, make this a favorite rendezvous, and like to boast that the Balalaika music there is superior to that anywhere else. An extremely good dinner for sixty-five cents crowds the room at an early hour, so that if you don't like waiting for a place you must go even earlier than that.

TURNING abruptly from the Russian atmosphere to that of the Franco-American, let us mention in passing that Maurice and Hughes have left the *Club Mirador,* and Moss and Fontana have taken their place and are making a tremendous hit. "Moss" is Marjorie Moss and "Fontana" is George Fontana, and this dancing team have already won an enviable success in London, Deauville and Nice. At the *Club Mirador* they dance to Johnny Johnson's orchestra, which of course furnishes the music for the guests as well.

A new dancing club opened is the *Club Moritz,* which prominent members of the theatrical profession are patronizing, Eddie Cantor having entertained a party of his friends there recently, ending up by entertaining the guests themselves. George Olsen's orchestra plays and there is a super-review, *Society Scandals,* with Ted Doner, Frances Williams, and a bevy of "Moritz beauties."

Still another dance club, the newest of all we believe, is *Borgo's,* on Fifty-fifth Street. This is very *intime* and exclusive, and you must apply to Mr. Borgo with credentials before you can have an admittance card. The interior of the club, one long room on the ground floor, shaped like a cartridge, is charming, with a small dance floor in the middle and seats around the wall circling it directly. The decoration suggests a Spanish patio, and the lighting is adorable. Luncheon, dinner, after-the-theatre. No cabaret. French cuisine. Scotti's orchestra. It is a place to cuddle away in and talk, or cuddle away and dance. We were much impressed with a certain subtle charm to its atmosphere, as of the Continental restaurants.

DON'T forget, though, in the midst of all these new offerings the long-established ones of *Sherry.* Old New Yorkers, by which we mean aris-

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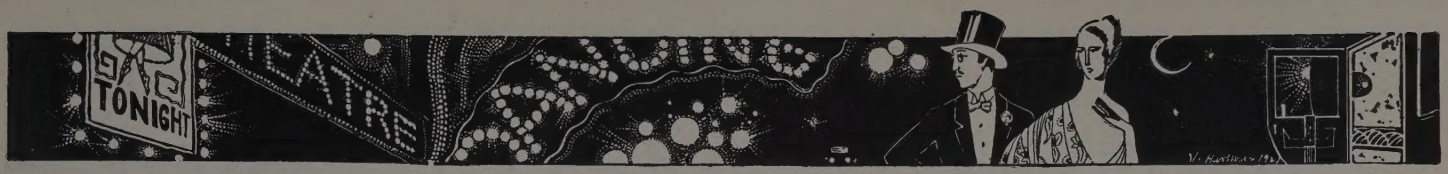

AUTHORS

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THE PLAY GUIDE
THEATRE MAGAZINE
2 West 45th Street, New York

tocratic New Yorkers, never do. Having lost Delmonico's, they are happy that there is still *Sherry's*. *Sherry's* means not only that lovely corner room at Fifty-eighth Street, overlooking the Plaza corner and Fifth Avenue, so ideal at lunch and tea-time, but also the new restaurant in Park Avenue, where the large and imposing dinner for the celebrated Serbian sculptor, Mestrovic, was given lately; as well as *Sherry's*, the candy shop, snuggled into the heart of The Waldorf. Whichever *Sherry* it is, it can be absolutely counted on for distinction in every branch of its service.

Alice Foote Macdougall is a lady who has a magic wand for creating instant popularity for her coffee-houses. The one on Forty-third Street, opened two years ago, achieved immediate success, was greatly enlarged and became even more popular. And now her third place, opened during the holidays on Forty-seventh Street, near the Avenue, and even larger than the other, is still hardly big enough to hold all the people who insist on lunching there between the hours of twelve and two. This edition of the Macdougall Coffee Shop is done in the manner of a Venetian courtyard, and for a touch of verisimilitude you may see the strings of garlic and peppers hanging from the little window aloft. We were told that during the first days after the opening this touch took the form of a family wash, but that was being a bit too true to life, and the garlic now reigns alone. The "mezzo-tinted" waitresses of Forty-third Street appear in Forty-seventh to play the rôle of olive-skinned Italians. Such good food as is served though! And of a Saturday, to say nothing of weekdays, such a crowd at lunch-time! But they are nothing daunted.

IF you are in a hurry and want to make your matinée on time, an alternative might be *The White Horse Tavern*, on West Forty-fifth Street. It is a cozy and unique chop-house on the English order and offers certain famous old English dishes, passed up as a rule because of the care and expense required in their preparation. There are charcoal grills for the chops and steaks, which have long been acknowledged by epicures to impart a certain occult flavor. And a hitherto little-known dish, in which the house specializes, is grilled scallops. Makes one's mouth water, what? Another feature of this inn is the service by a staff of trained English servants, gay in their red hunting vests. Credit for all this goes to "Jimmy" Groves, who was once manager of the old Piccadilly Rendezvous.

And since we have given you so many atmospheres here, let us wind off with a touch of Japan. If you want something rather unusual in the offering of Japanese food, not on the lines of the average chop-suey restaurant, go over to Fifty-eighth Street, between Eighth and Ninth Avenues. Up a brownstone flight and ring the bell. The place is called *Miyako*. Inside you will find two moderately spacious rooms, furnished with wide, square tables, and mild and innocuous touches of Japanese decoration. But don't be too fussy, and concentrate on the food, which is delicious and so esthetically served as would make the eating of far inferior stuff a pleasure. Each guest is given his or her individual lacquer tray, the soup comes in red-and-black lacquer bowls, and your meat-for-all course is cooked on a little brazier in the center of the table. Individual chop-sticks, accompanying the tray, are the only implements for eating you first encounter, but if you get discouraged, or George insists, a fork and a spoon will be brought. As to the soup, "Lift up and drink," rhythmically abjures your Japanese waiter.

ANNE ARCHBALD.

Forthcoming Attractions

Impending Broadway Openings As We Go To Press

She Wanted to Know. A comedy from the French of Paul Geraldy, with Grace George, Bruce McRae and Frederic Worlock.

The Undercurrent. A comedy by William H. McMasters, with Harry Beresford and Frank Shannon.

The Witch Doctor. A play by Walter Archer Frost, with A. E. Anson, James Rennie and Ruth Shepley.

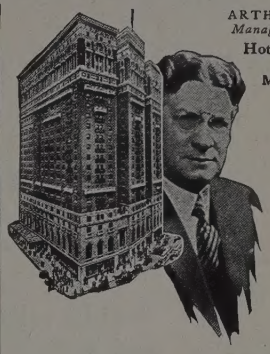
The Devil Within. A mystery play by Charles T. Horan, with Helen Holmes, Lenore Sorsby, Mary Hampton, William Ingersoll.

The Marionette Man. A melodrama by Frances Lightner, with C. Henry Gordon, Ralph Locke and Marion Ballou.

The Dark Angel. A play by H. B. Trevelyan, adapted by Guy Bolton, with Patricia Collinge, Reginald Mason and Claude King.

Moon Magic. A play by Rita Weiman, with Margola Gillmore, Rita Jolivet, Louis Calhern and Hamilton Revelle.

Louis the Fourteenth. A musical comedy by Frankel and Vilhelm, adapted by Arthur Wimperis.



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Managing Director
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A Frank Talk

to the Man or Woman Planning to Visit New York

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I want you to think well of my great City of New York—and I can do this only by having you think well of the McAlpin.

So I invite you here—wire, write or phone—and I assure you the kind of treatment you would like if you yourself were the manager of the McAlpin.

Arthur L. Lee
Managing Director

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A Few Features
of the
Anniversary Number

Six Thousand Plays were produced in New York in the last 25 years. How many of these did you see? There will be a complete list of them in the Anniversary Number.

When They First Knew Broadway. Reproductions of old photos showing players famous to-day, as they looked when starting on their careers.

The Stars of Yesterday. Where have they disappeared to—Viola Allen, Maud Adams, Annie Russell, Rose Stahl, Mabel Taliaferro? This article will tell you.

The Romance of Theatre Building. 25 years ago New York had perhaps a dozen first-class theatres; to-day she has 60! How they were built and who built them.

The Passing of the Old Stock Companies
Where Are We Going in Scenic Art?
Playwrights of the Quarter Century
Production Costs Then and Now
The Conquest of Jazz
Development of the Motion Picture

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The recent Paramount Pictures, *Her Love Story* and *Wages of Virtue*, contain still more evidence of quite different Glorias, while her latest picture is *Madame Sans-Gene*. This was made in and near Paris with the support of leading lights of the French Stage.

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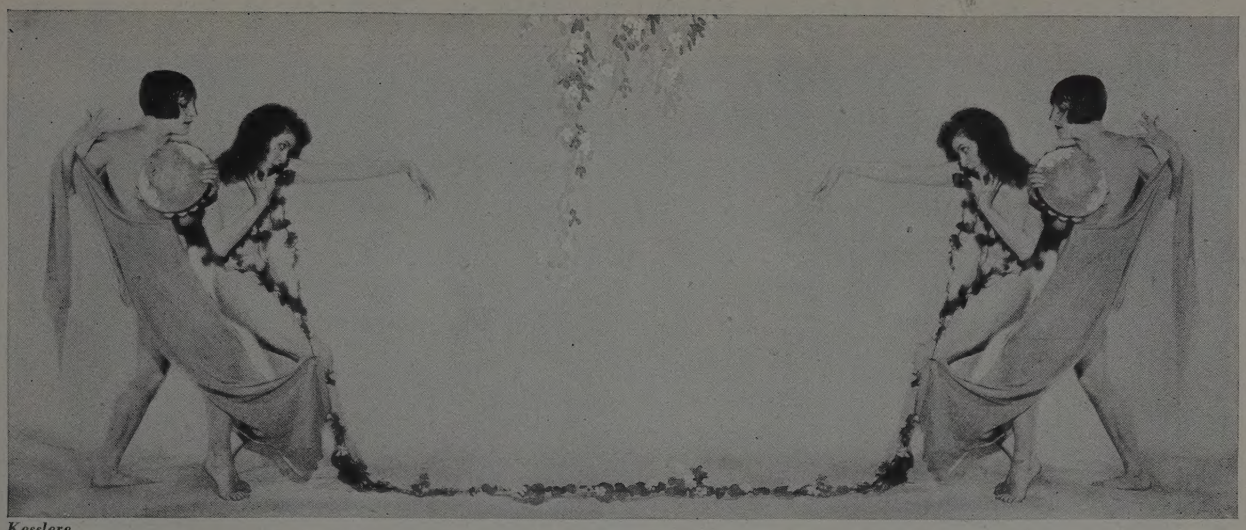

Kesslere

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IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: What is an Art theatre and what a Commercial theatre? Both sides will be represented in an interesting debate between Kenneth McGowan and Edgar Selwyn in our next issue. ☙ Do you know the matinée idol and heroine of Chinatown? A brilliant article on the Chinese Theatre in New York will describe them to you in our April number. ☙ The unique views of a successful Broadway dramatist on love are amusingly related in an entertaining article in our forthcoming issue. ☙ Pauline Lord, in a special interview, speaks intimately of further ambitions and new aims, heretofore unsuspected by the public. ☙ Mirrors of Stageland reflect striking pictures of William A. Brady and Channing Pollock. ☙ More bright gossip and important history of the theatre twenty-five years ago, written by Sydney Rosenfeld. ☙ Who are the Dancing Dandies of the musical shows? A clever article on the mysterious existence of the chorus man. ☙ A new department. Radio. Interesting news of the personalities beside the microphone.

London Office: 10 Buckingham Street, Strand
J. T. Grein, resident correspondent

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THEATRE MAGAZINE

VOL. XL. No. 288 MARCH, 1925

Goldberg

ROSALIND FULLER

Whose Delicate Beauty and Sweet English Voice Invest With Singular Charm the Rôle of the Simple Milkmaid in the Provincetown's Successful Revival of "Patience"

Photo George Maillard Kesslere

CAPRICE

Kesslere Captures a Graceful, Joyous Moment in the Dancing of Fowler and Tamara

THEATRE MAGAZINE

ARTHUR HORNBLOW, Editor

The Editor's Uneasy Chair

Will Radio Hurt the Theatre?

ANOTHER crisis has arisen in the American theatre, a crisis, says William A. Brady, the veteran manager, that threatens the very existence of the drama in this country. When Mr. Brady, blunt and outspoken as usual, adds that his fellow managers have no one to blame but themselves, we are inclined to agree with him.

That the invention of the motion picture has worked incalculable harm to the legitimate theatre is beyond dispute. The fact remains that the movie supplied cheap and novel entertainment at a time when the amusement-going public was getting fed up with bad plays and ever-mounting box-office prices for poor seats. The crowd began going to the pictures, resulting in a serious falling off in theatre patronage.

Now the managers sense a more formidable peril in Radio, which furnishes an elaborate program which the potential theatregoer can enjoy free and without taking the trouble to leave his own fireside. Some managers, notably Arthur Hammerstein with *Wildflower,* Dr. Riesenfeld with his famous Rialto Symphony Orchestra and Dr. Rothapfel, the celebrated "Roxie," with his Capitol "gang," claim good advertising results have been obtained from broadcasting their performances. Most producers, however, are bitterly opposed to it. Common sense tells anyone that broadcasting plays cannot possibly do the theatre any good. At best, the play gets over badly. It is heard, not seen. It is robbed of whatever enhanced value is derived from handsome costumes and beautiful stage settings, to say nothing of the pleasurable emotions and satisfaction the audience has in watching the movements, the gestures, the facial play of the actors. Frank Gillmore, speaking for the Actors' Equity Association, declared it the sense of his organization that Radio constituted a serious menace to the player's craft.

On top of this came the sensational *coup* of the Victor Talking Machine Company. Until now the leading operatic artists have declined to broadcast on the plea of exclusive contracts with the Victor Company, which concern, until the advent of Radio, made rich singers richer by selling their records. But the popularity of Radio put a crimp in the record business. People were buying Radio sets instead of gramophones. The Victor Company, therefore, hit upon the plan of having famous artists broadcast, to stimulate the sale of records, and on January 1 last John McCormack, the world-famous tenor, and Mme. Lucrezia Bori, prima donna of the Metropolitan Opera House, sang into the microphone of WEAF, delighting, over half the United States, a vast audience conservatively estimated at 6,000,000 persons.

Little wonder that theatre managers took alarm. If people, sitting comfortably at home, can enjoy for nothing a gorgeous concert for which, at a box-office, they would have to pay $5 or $6 a seat, why should they go to the theatre? In fact, loss of attendance was immediately felt. On the night this unprecedented Radio concert took place the patronage of nearly every theatre on Broadway was affected. Many plays for which it had generally been found impossible to buy seats, found themselves with empty rows.

Undoubtedly it is a serious situation, but who is to blame? The theatre manager, unmindful of his own shortcomings, attacks Radio. That, of course, is utterly foolish. Puny, impotent hostility was never a serious obstacle to human progress. Radio has come to stay. Its full possibilities, the benefits it will render to mankind, no one can foresee. If the theatre manager sees in Radio a dangerous competitor, he has an easy remedy. He must meet the threatened competition by improving the quality of his own entertainment. Give better plays—that is the answer. The managers, says Mr. Brady, are conceited ignoramuses. When one reads the record of this season's failures, we are tempted to think he is right. For one careful, conscientious producer, loving the art he serves, striving only to give the public the best, there are twenty others who are merely speculators, overbuilding, overproducing, putting on any kind of play, often with insufficient rehearsal, anxious for only one thing—to make money. For one real success this winter, how many plays have gone to the storehouse after a two-weeks' run? Even "The Road" has risen in revolt—in protest against poor companies and hurried, slovenly performances. Every day one hears of troupes closing or stranded for lack of patronage. When the legitimate theatre fails the "tall timbers," what is left but the movies and Radio? Bad plays, dirty plays, exorbitant prices of admission, the impossibility of getting good seats except on payment of an outrageous premium—all this has gradually disgusted the public with the theatre and made them welcome with open arms an invention such as Radio, which brings entertainment right to their door and charges nothing for it. The greedy, speculative manager alone is to blame for this new crisis threatening the theatre. His obstinacy, avariciousness, ignorance, pig-headedness has been Radio's opportunity.

Discourtesy in the Box Office

AMONG the several reasons advanced for the amusement-going public's apparent desertion of the theatre in favor of the stay-at-home pleasures of Radio is that the box-office man of the average Broadway theatre too often assumes a bullying, insolent attitude towards the would-be ticket purchaser. Not only is the latter unable to secure desirable seats, but he has to put up with discourtesy, sarcasm, scowls.

The complaint is well founded. For some unexplained reason, certain box-office employés do adopt a hostile, impudent manner towards the public. Presumably a ticket-seller is employed to sell tickets. Yet from the abruptness of his demeanor and the incivility of his tongue he appears to take offence directly the box-office window is approached. We do not say that this senseless behavior is that of all box-office men, but it is of a majority of them.

Such conduct seems inexplicable, yet the cause is not far to seek. The French have an apt saying, *Tel maître, tel valet,* meaning that whatever sort of person the master is, his valet will be the same. Frankly, most of our theatre owners are not Chesterfields. A life spent in the noble pursuit of the dollar does not permit of much time for the cultivation of manners. One never finds discourtesy in the box-office of a manager who is himself courteous.

Photo Arnold Genthe

Lucrezia (*Helen Ware*) Giovanni (*Claude King*)

SCENE IN STEPHEN PHILLIPS' POETIC TRAGEDY "PAOLO AND FRANCESCA"

ACT II. LUCREZIA: *Let us hunt this trail!*
And yet you will mislike whither it leads.
GIOVANNI: *Nothing can hold me now.*

The Poet In Our Theatre To-day

To Be Popular With Audiences He Must Discard Aloofness and Learn to Know the Theatre First Hand

By ROSALIND IVAN

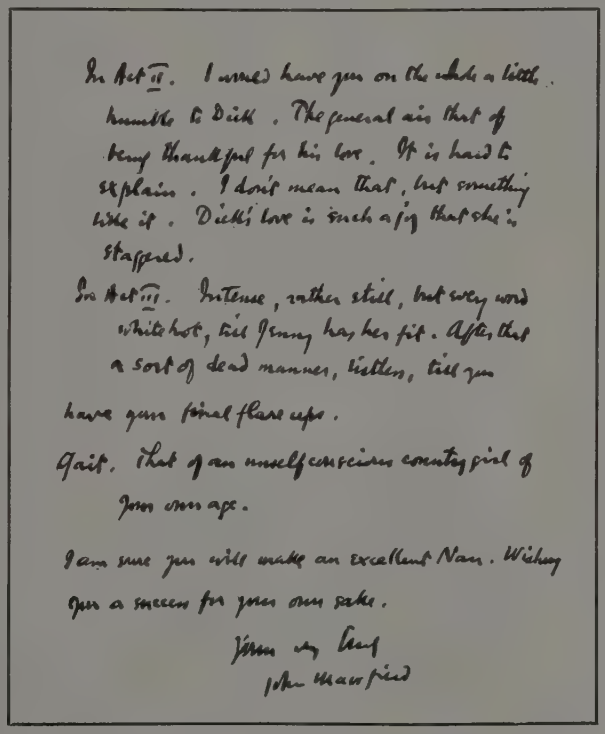
THE recent successful revival of the late Stephen Phillips's *Paolo and Francesca* at the Booth Theatre (its projected short season of special matinées has already been extended) once more proves that a poet of genuine play-writing ability has a place in the theatre.

This statement is confidently affirmed in spite of the fact that earlier this winter *Hassan* folded his tent and departed after a stay of two weeks. Although written by the late James Elroy Flecker, one of England's finest poets, who was praised by Lord Dunsany as one of the greatest of the age, the play failed with reason. It lagged. The actors were handicapped by parts that had no dramatic continuity and which did not fulfil the promises of their beginnings. The interest created by the poet Ishak especially, and by Hassan, who should have been the central character, had been dissipated long before the last act. Neither had the Caliph, the most consistently developed character, any dramatic place in the play. Throughout the lyrical beauty of the lines was lost.

IN London this play met with success and profits. Perhaps because of the familiarity of Flecker's verse among the English. It is interesting to note that it was a success, because it is obvious, from the construction of the play and the writing of parts, that Mr. Flecker had no intimate knowledge of the theatre.

John Masefield, one of the most popular of English poets, has been unsuccessful theatrically both in England and America. His plays have been given for special performances and take their place from time to time in repertory theatre companies, but the players and critics get more enjoyment from them than do the audiences —and yet has any writer greater power or a more striking dramatic quality in the telling of a narrative poem than John Masefield? From his first line to his last, he grips the imagination. Nothing could be more vivid than *Dauber, The Widow in the Bye Street, The Everlasting Mercy,* and the panting run of *Reynard the Fox.* It is all throbbing, pulsating drama of flesh-and-blood people and of a wild animal. The kind of drama the theatre is clamoring for, but Masefield does not seem able to bring this valuable quality on to the stage when his plays are acted, and his plays are not as interesting to read as are his poems. The difference in form at once makes him self-conscious.

The Tragedy of Nan has come nearer to success than any of his other plays. Nan is an interesting character, over-sentimental and perhaps too morbid; nevertheless, a fine part. Gaffer, in the same play, is a sensitive and poetic creation, but Masefield's plays as plays do not interest. He himself is a shy man in some ways, and he seems to shun the theatre. The atmosphere seems to startle and disturb him. He seldom goes even to a rehearsal of his plays. He belongs to the country and to the sea. The soil of England he knows and loves and the sea he knows. The humble people of the earth he knows. Of these he writes in his poignant style, in his unique manner, which we receive as his own direct message to our minds, emotions and pity.



In Act II. I would have you on the whole a little humble & Dick. The general air that of being thankful for his love. It is hard to explain. I don't mean that, but something like it. Dick's love is such a joy that she is staggered.

In Act III. Intense, rather still, but very word white hot, till Jenny has her fit. After, that a sort of dead manner, listless, till you have your final flare up.

Gait. That of an unselfconscious country girl of your own age.

I am sure you will make an excellent Nan. Wishing you a success for your own sake.

Yours very truly
John Masefield

Facsimile of a letter from John Masefield to the author of this article, in which he expresses his wishes regarding the interpretation of the title-rôle in his play, *The Tragedy of Nan*

However, when it comes to the theatre, the impression must be made through the medium of actors, and consequently these actors cannot be ignored. A definite technique is required, different from that of the poem. To understand these requirements, the poet-dramatist must first care about the theatre quite passionately; he must love the grease-paint and all its garish make-believe. He must know the playhouse under many guises and love it, no matter how dilapidated or how beautiful it may be.

MR. MASEFIELD has, of late years, been directing and encouraging the acting of literary plays in Oxford, with the community-theatre idea in mind, but that will not develop a vital, playing drama, as it savors too much of the amateur and is of little practical use to play-writing. It is his lack of sympathy with the theatre and what is of the theatre that kills the spirit which makes his narrative poems so extraordinary and renders his plays to us as lifeless things. John Masefield did not learn to write his magnificent sea poems by being an officer in the British Navy, but by rubbing shoulders with the humblest men of the sea.

THE most significant poet writing for the stage to-day is William Butler Yeats, winner of the Nobel prize. His energy towards bettering the drama has been so unflagging that one wonders why such a brilliant enthusiast has not yet accomplished what he is aiming for—a universal appeal.

Mr. Yeats has written several plays of exquisite fantasy and grace, of a rare perfection of style and rhythm. He worked hard as director of the Abbey Theatre Company in Dublin, which was organized by Lady Gregory for the production of his plays as well as her own and some others. Yeats is an intellectual, and lovely and lyrical as are his plays, the appreciation of them is confined to a strictly limited circle of trained minds. They have had even less success in England than the plays of John Masefield, while in America, where they were acted during the visit of the Abbey Theatre Company, although they were charming contrasts to the sombre style of the genius Synge, no manager has seemed anxious to produce them independently.

However, Mr. Yeats's contribution to the theatre of poetic drama must be taken seriously. His work for it is one of the most important movements afoot. He is a pioneer, ahead of his time, and it is quite likely that he will live to take a permanent place in the theatre of to-morrow.

The poet who has met with the widest generosity from the much-maligned Broadway manager is the American scholar, Percy MacKaye. He cannot complain of lack of opportunity. One manager after another has come forward to give him his chance. They have treated him royally. They have provided him with the cleverest actors, the loveliest stage settings—all they had to offer, they have laid at the feet of a kind and charming personality—but, with all his advantages, Mr. MacKaye has not yet written a play that holds the attention of the public at large.

Is Percy MacKaye damned by the word "scholar"? Is it because he belongs

(*Continued on page* 54)

Call for Rehearsal—11 A.M.

Weird Haunts Where Distraught Stage Directors Whip Plays and Revues Into Shape

By LAWTON MACKALL

"EVERYBODY be on hand tomorrow morning at eleven at Donovan's Swimming Academy."

The speaker is not an instructor in natation, nor is he addressing a bevy of Annette Kellerman bathing beauties. Just a frazzled play director speaking to the cast of a mystery drama now in preparation.

Why concoct a mystery in a swimming academy? Simply because rehearsals have to be held *somewhere,* and with all the new productions under way and all the road companies getting ready, there are not enough theatre stages available. Hence one is driven to hiring a hall, and the gymnasium of Mr. Donovan's venerable natation establishment on Fifty-ninth Street, near Columbus Circle, reverberates with the mad cries of melodrama—unless it has already been booked for farce or ballet.

Other rehearsal haunts are the Holy Cross Lyceum, on Forty-third Street, west of Eighth Avenue; Palm Garden, on Fifty-eighth Street, near Third Avenue; a place on West Fortieth Street, calling itself sardonically The Cozy Corner; Bryant Hall, on Sixth Avenue, opposite Bryant Park, and various dance-halls and lodge-rooms in assorted parts of the city, some of them quite remote from Times Square. Walter Hampden rehearsed *Cyrano* in Greenwich House, down-town below Christopher Street. The parish house of St. Chrisostom's Chapel, which until its recent demolition stood on Seventh Avenue opposite the back of the Metropolitan Opera House, cradled many a play.

"I'm having a terrible time learning my part," sighed a young actress. "It was handed to me only yesterday—the girl they had wouldn't do—and three days from now we open in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. The rest of the company have been rehearsing three weeks."

"What sort of part is it?" I asked.

"Oh, I'm supposed to be a wistful, whimsical little ingénue—one of those shy but romantic creatures who is always getting into a tearful flutter about something."

THESPIS IN A RESTAURANT

"AND where are you rehearsing this pretty part?"

"In a lodge-room! It's the most ghastly place you ever saw. Red plush furnishings and a platform with three solemn chairs and a table with a gavel on it. And the pictures on the walls!"

"Portraits of deceased members?"

"Worse than that: Indian chiefs, full length, scowling in their paint and feathers. There are dusty tomahawks and old guns and wicked-looking bows and arrows. And that's the place I've got to learn in two days to be a fluffy young simperer!"

Her description presented quite a contrast to the popular notion of rehearsals. One likes to picture a perfectly equipped stage in a theatre hallowed with traditions of great acting. Just to walk those boards is to feel inspiration. The darkened auditorium gives kindly promise of the audience that is to be. In the wings the respectful stage-hands wait attentively, ready to serve when called upon. In such an atmosphere the illusion is built up as though by magic. Instead—"Report tomorrow at ten at Unity Hall."

Exeunt ringleted ingénues, dashing leading men and bobbed-hair villains from the rehearsal room which houses art for $2.50 a day, paid cash and in advance

One of the current revues, a show notable for the imaginative beauty of some of its numbers, was rehearsed chiefly in a dilapidated German restaurant east of Third Avenue. In dingy rooms once gay with the clink of steins, where beer foamed freely and pretzels were in their prime and Sängerfests made the rafters ring, the performers booked for this revue were to be seen practising their "stuff." In the forlorn ballroom a superannuated piano was being diligently thumped while a trick dancer tried out fancy steps. Bare-legged members of the chorus stood about watching or lay on benches to rest their weary muscles. In smaller rooms comedy skits were being run through. In one I saw a well-known director seated at the head of a table around which were gathered half a dozen men and women. He was reading a 'script aloud to them and giving explanations as he went along. In another room a director was remonstrating in a tired but patient voice.

"No, you don't turn yet," he corrected, catching the actor by the shoulders. "You are looking at *her,* and you don't see the other girl till she is right opposite you. *This* way." And he showed him. "Come on now, let's try it again, and get it right this time." Eventually it *is* right; but what effort, what innumerable repetitions are necessary! A skit which plays eight minutes in the finished production may be rehearsed for hours at a time.

I watched an earnest young woman who appeared to be working harder than all the rest. She was clad in a scanty work-costume of some cheap material. The roughness with which they tossed her about in an Apache scene almost made me wince. There was no faking in the manner of her being flung upon the dusty floor. "That girl has grit," I said to myself. "She is bound to succeed some day." Then I learned who she was—a star celebrated on both sides of the Atlantic. It was her Rolls-Royce I had noticed standing outside the door.

AMAZING VITALITY

THE vitality of these people! A weakling might be able to get through eight performances a week, but no weakling could survive a month in rehearsal halls. Actors are supposed to be temperamental, yet they practise their parts under conditions that would drive a business man frantic. "It isn't easy," says a friend of mine, "to register deep emotion and read lines as though your heart were breaking, when from the next room you hear the dum-dum-dumming of a terrible piano and chorus girls singing something about 'Snappy Pappa,' and clog-dancers on the floor above are clattering a tattoo on the ceiling."

To compensate for surroundings such as these and for a stage set consisting of three or four kitchen chairs, the director is apt to indulge in highly embroidered language. There is the cherished instance of the super-exponent of nuance who advised, "Read that line with a nice, round, pear-shaped tone," provoking the query, "Which end of the pear do you want?" An injunction frequently heard is, "Make it *eager.*"

Indeed, the bright lexicon of blah is ransacked for phrases with which to impress the unregenerate actor. Musical terms are conveniently vague. For instance: "Your tempo is wrong; keep this scene *adagio.*" "Read that line more *legato.*" "Say that with a sort of *arpeggio.*" These are actual expressions which well-known directors have used. They sound well and permit no come-back.

The fine points of love-making call for special explanations. "I want you to kiss her hands, but I want the respect that this might show to be killed; so keep your hat on." "Miss Jones, since I'm trying to make the character of this man Norton very despicable, in the scene where he kisses you passionately, I want you to wear light blue."

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THE MODERN SLAVE-MART AS WYNN SEES IT

Enthroned in the empty auditorium, the sophisticated producer appraises stage beauties-in-the-rough. Left to right: Half-portion of Aphasia Simmons, who took a course of elocution at Centerville University; Mamie Madigan, who won the dance contest at the West Broadway Social Club; Sallie Solaski, prize beauty at the Punxutawney, Pa., Harvest Festival; Helene Holocaust, graduate of Mme. De Brie's Operatic Gymnasium, Class of '20; "Baby Ruby" Mulligatawney (who feels that her stage make-up is slipping); Margareta Pomme-de-Terre, who was once told that she looked like Barbara La Marr, and "up-stage," in the checked rompers, paying no attention to the proceedings, is Nedda Wayburn, who has two good reasons (one of them showing modestly) for believing she is sure of getting a job

The Men Who Write the Hits

No. 6: Max Marcin, Author of "Silence," the Season's Most Sensational Melodrama

By CAROL BIRD

PROLIFICACY is the dominant quality of Max Marcin. Mr. Marcin wrote *Silence,* the sensational melodrama which is crimping the hair of theatregoers, and *Badges,* both destined for long runs this season. He is also the author of *Eyes of Youth, House of Glass, Cheating Cheaters, Three Live Ghosts* and *The Nightcap,* successes of other seasons. He has had his hand in fifty or more plays, for he is one of Broadway's well-known play-doctors, injecting into other dramatists' work the magic life-blood which guarantees longevity. In still other plays he has been a collaborator. With Sam Shipman he wrote *The Woman in Room 13.* He also wrote the farce called *Here Comes the Bride.*

Besides his dramatic output, which so far has consisted mostly of sensational mystery and crook plays, he wrote, in the comparatively short period of three years, twenty-eight serials and something like one hundred and fifty short stories. Before he entered the field of short-story writing he was a newspaper reporter in New York. It would be difficult to estimate how many hundreds of columns of copy he turned out in those reportorial years.

Max Marcin's rise to the enviable place of one of Broadway's well-known playwrights, whose fame has attracted London producers, has not been a meteoric one. His background is one of hard and continuous labor. His is the "genius for taking infinite pains." His climb to fame and the accompanying perquisites has not been a swift ascent. He worked his way up arduously, by the route of tireless work.

For many years Max Marcin was a feature and general news-writer on the staffs of New York newspapers. While connected with the old New York *Press,* he was assigned to cover the Thaw case. He was shot out on the story when it first broke and stayed with it for two years. It was the big story which was actually responsible, indirectly, in launching him into play-writing. He was earning about $100 a week on space when the Thaw case first broke into print. Then he and other space-writers working on the world-famous murder case made sudden fortunes as fortunes are estimated by newspaper men. Their pay went up to $500 a week.

AFTER the Thaw case died down, it was impossible for the ambitious Marcin to go back to a normal salary. He started to write fiction, which paid more. Possibly he was inspired by the dramatic happenings during his two years of court work on the Thaw case, the Nan Patterson trial and other famous and infamous murder cases which he covered. At any rate, he soon developed into a prolific short-story writer and writer of serials. His stuff had a popular appeal and was contracted for two and three years in advance. He averaged about 4,000 words a day, which is considered by writers a pretty stiff grind.

One day some one bought the dramatic rights of a rather obscure story of his. This originated the idea of writing a play, and he began to make a deliberate study of play-writing. He attended all the season's successes, visiting each one about a dozen times. He wanted to put

Underwood and Underwood

MAX MARCIN

The prolific, who has written nine successful plays, doctored some fifty more and written about 200 short stories

his finger on that mysterious and golden quality which makes a dramatic offering a success and, lacking which, turns it into a frightful flop.

After this period of study, he wrote *The House of Glass,* finishing it in one month's time, and sold it. This off his mind, he went to the Maine woods to write another play. He selected an isolated spot, for he wanted to work unmolested. After three weeks, a messenger who had been seeking him all that time, located him, and brought him an urgent demand from the producers of his first play to return to New York at once. At the office of the theatrical men he was accused of plagiarism.

"You took your idea for the play from this magazine story," they charged, handing him the evidence.

"I know it," responded Marcin. The producers were astounded by his seeming bravado.

"Do you know the author, Hilary Blake?" they asked.

Of course, you've suspected this past three seconds that Hilary Blake was only one of Max Marcin's tricky *noms de plume.* So all was well, with Mr. Marcin at liberty to go back to the Maine woods and write himself another Rolls-Royce or two.

MAX MARCIN does not look like a playwright. But then playwrights cannot be tucked in the "type" class. Most all actors look like actors. But every playwright I have ever met looks like a lawyer, a doctor, a butcher, a baker—anything but what one might expect a playwright to resemble.

This No. 6 in the series was born in New York about forty-three years ago. He is of German-Jewish parentage, of medium height and build, with black curly hair and an alert, eager countenance. He is matter-of-fact in manner, absolutely without pose or affectation. He acts and talks like a regular newspaper man and has the typical newspaper man's slightly nervous, high-strung mannerisms.

At the time of this writing he is in London. He sailed a few days ago to stage *Silence* over there. Godfrey Tearle is to play the lead. After *Silence* is on the boards, he will take up with London producers the matter of presenting *The House of Glass, Three Live Ghosts* and *Give and Take.* The last-named play Mr. Marcin did not write, but he was the producer of it over here.

So practical is the author of *Silence* that in the midst of busy preparations for sailing and the prospects of a prosperous and successful season in Europe, he was fussing a bit about the damp and foggy London winter.

"The sun never shines and you can't find your way home in the fog," he complained. Then he took up the subject of successful play-writing, answering a question put to him as one who should be an authority on the matter.

"The play with an interesting story is the one that goes over," he said. "This country is essentially a story-telling country. I mean that the chap who can tell a clean, good story in an entertaining way is still the popular man around the corner grocery, about the house, in family circles where young daughters congregate. He is popular because he is always interesting and always inoffensive. He can tell a good story that the other fellow has never heard.

"Now this same rule applies to the chap who writes a popular hit. He does not attempt to inject morals, uplift or preachment, but simply to tell a good story in an entertaining way. And, of course, the greater the story, the greater hit the play will be.

"It is precisely like a magazine story. There are good stories, mediocre ones and very poor ones, and, naturally, it is the good ones that hit the mark. The popular

(*Continued on page* 58)

White

MARY NEWCOMB

Who gave such a sympathetic performance in *The Woman on the Jury*, will again display her tense emotional powers this spring in a new play

Muray

PHYLLIS POVAH

Seen recently as the unhappy bride in Phillips's poetic drama of the eternally beautiful love-tale, *Paolo and Francesca*

Muray

MARGARET LAWRENCE

Sparkling comédienne, whose dash and verve add to the daring humor of the triangle situation in *Isabel*, a comedy from the German of Kurt Goetz

Goldberg

JUDITH ANDERSON

Vivid impersonator of last season's most deadly snake-woman, will soon appear in a new play, *The Dove*

Muray

MADGE KENNEDY

Whose gift of quaint comedy, combined with compelling dramatic qualities, stand her in good stead in *Badges*

DRAMATIC LIGHTS THAT NEVER FAIL

Interesting Leading Women Whose Unusual Talents Enhance The Theatrical Season

Carla (*Lenore Ulric*) insists on Manon, the unknown stranger (*Virginia Hammond*), coming in and changing her wet gown, which was unfortunately sprinkled while Carla was watering her flowers

Roland, her temperamental husband (*William Courtenay*), says his fat friend (*Lennox Pawle*) is going to fight a duel and he must act as second, but Carla knows he is going to meet Manon

Photos White, N. Y.

Roland comes to Manon's apartment quite prepared for an adventure, but when the veiled Turkish princess (*Lenore Ulric*) arrives, Manon is instantly forgotten and he falls desperately in love with—his own wife

"THE HAREM" AMUSES AT THE BELASCO THEATRE

New Vajda Comedy a Diverting Variant of the Guardsman Theme

Mr. Hornblow Goes to the Play

Carnival

Comedy in three acts by Ferenc Molnar. Produced by Charles Frohman, Inc., at the Cort Theatre December 29, with the following cast:

Nicholas Kornady, Tom Nesbitt; Edmund, Nicholas Joy; Camilla, Elsie Ferguson; Rudolf, Stanley Logan; A Cavalry Captain, Franklyn Fox; Matyas Oez, Leo G. Carroll; Sandor Oroszy, Berton Churchill; Liszka, Anna Gray; Police Commissaire, Nicholas Joy; Police Secretary, Henry Bloomfield; Secret Service Man, Richard Bowler; A Girl, Margaret Hutchins; Coat-room Woman, Mignon O'Doherty.

THE sheep-like mental attitude of your average theatre manager was never better illustrated than by the production of this weird Molnar comedy. It's quite impossible that Mr. Gilbert Miller could have put the piece on because he thought it a good play. The probability is he never even read it. He knew the same author's *Swan* to be a money-getter; he had also heard of plays called *Liliom* and *The Guardsman*. Surely *Carnival*, by the same Molnar, he argued, would have a chance—no matter how stupid it might be. That is how most present-day producers reason. It explains what otherwise is incomprehensible—why a play as silly and inept as *Carnival* was given a metropolitan production and the intelligence of a New York audience insulted by being asked to sit through such senseless piffle.

The play has to do with the loss of a crown jewel of enormous value. A court ball is being given, and Camilla Oroszy, one of the court ladies, happens to stumble across the glittering bauble. Unhappy with a tyrannical husband and half-heartedly in love with an ardent young musician, she sees in her find a way of release from domestic thraldom. While distracted court officials are scouring the palace, searching for the jewel, she informs her lover that she has found it and intends to keep it. She proposes that they elope together to enjoy freedom and independence in some distant land. He agrees, but later weakens, and seeing the futility of her plan, Camilla throws the gem back on the floor, where the police find it. She surrenders her timid admirer to another woman and goes home, once more to be shackled with the chains of domestic tyranny.

The play is incredibly crude when one considers its distinguished authorship. The action is slow and labored, the dialogue dull and wearisome, the humor childish and archaic—how archaic may be judged from the fact that when, in search of the elusive jewel, the persons of the court ladies are searched by the police, an attempt is made to get laughs out of a description of the women's underwear—this, mind you, in the year of grace 1924, when feminine *lingerie* no longer conceals any secrets from the male sex, but is provocatively exposed to view in every shop-window. Even Kelcey Allen, ready to smile at anything, sobered up at this astounding exhibit of Continental daring.

Elsie Ferguson did not shine overbrightly as the insipid, uninteresting heroine. Colorless, spiritless, unconvincing, she had not a single sincere moment and made the wholly artificial character seem even more unreal and foolish. The actress' unfortunate mannerisms also were accentuated more than usual, and her always faulty enunciation made her speech more difficult than ever to follow.

The part of Liszka, a querulous, voluble woman, disappointed in love, played by Anna Gray, was an even greater tax on the audience's patience. The actress' diction was so bad that only one word in ten was distinguishable. Her nervous, high-pitched voice and hysterical manner were painful to witness.

With the exception of the husband, the man of iron, played with dignity and force by Berton Churchill, most of the other male characters looked and acted like waiters.

The one redeeming feature of this most unhappy evening were the splendid stage settings by Lee Simonson—decorations in exquisite taste, but far too fine to be wasted on such wretched material.

Mr. Hornblow Specially Recommends:

CANDIDA—Superb revival of Bernard Shaw's masterpiece acted with supreme artistry by Katharine Cornell and associates.

OLD ENGLISH—Interesting play by John Galsworthy in which George Arliss plays the part of a man of eighty. A dish for epicures in the theatre.

ROSE-MARIE—That *rara avis*, an intelligent musical play! Tuneful, beautiful and decent. In the title-rôle charming Mary Ellis, a newcomer, establishes herself as the peer of any musical comedy star in the country.

SILENCE—Another crook play. The best seen in New York since *Within the Law*.

THE GUARDSMAN—Amusing comedy by the author of *Liliom*. One of the best things the Theatre Guild has done.

THE FIREBRAND—Entertaining comedy farce based on the hectic career of Benvenuto Cellini. One of the most amusing pieces on Broadway.

THE STUDENT PRINCE—Delightful musical version of the *Old Heidelberg* play. Tuneful music, excellent singing and an unusual chorus.

Patience

Comic opera in two acts. Music by Arthur Sullivan. Book by W. S. Gilbert. Revived by the Experimental Theatre, Inc., at the Provincetown Theatre December 29, with the following cast:

Patience, Rosalind Fuller; Reginald Bunthorne, Edgar Stehli; Archibald Grosvenor, Stanley Howlett; Lady Jane, Miss Flavia Arcaro; Lady Saphir, Miss Mary Blair; Lady Angela, Miss Helen Freeman; Lady Ella, Miss Norma Millay; Colonel Calverley, Mr. George George; Major Murgatroyd, Mr. John Rogers; Lieut. the Duke of Dunstable, Mr. Kenneth Wheeler; An Ecstatic Maiden, Miss Juliet Brenon; Mr. Bunthorne's Solicitor, Mr. Feltin Elkins.

PATIENCE, that delightful medley of cant and attitudinizing, first produced at the Opera-Comique, in 1881, to satirize the esthetic craze, rampant at the time, with Oscar Wilde leading the *poseurs*, affords the same pleasure to theatregoers as that offered by *Fashion*.

But the tiny, two-by-four stage of the Provincetown Theatre is certainly not the most effective place to introduce the twenty love-sick maidens and the battalion of stalwart Dragoon Guards who figure prominently in the quaint Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. Much of the posing and tripping and drilling which this comic musical entertainment calls for must necessarily be curbed because of lack of space. There are only about ten languishing damsels to sentimentalize over the anemic poets, only a handful of dragoons, and these clutter up the little stage.

Edgar Stehli, as Bunthorne, is an exceedingly amusing esthete who poses among the languishing ladies and recites to them his own sickly poems. Stanley Howlett, endowed with a fine barytone voice and an excruciatingly funny pair of long legs, is more than satisfying in the rôle of the other esthetic poet, whose every airy gesture of the hand reveals his insincerity.

The incomparable lyric about "the matter-of-fact young man" was sung with sly understanding by Edgar Stehli and Stanley Howlett as their mincing forms revolved about in a circle. Rosalind Fuller sang with charm and a good voice the rôle of Patience, the milkmaid, though her costume was not exactly as fresh and pleasing to the eye as it might have been.

Regardless of the Provincetown Theatre's limitations, this classic operetta will afford joy to those who have the courage to sit through several hours of entertainment in a small, airless room, herded together tightly on hard wooden benches. There is always the relief of the intermission, of course, when gasping lungs can be recharged with fresh air outdoors.

Ladies of the Evening

Play in four acts by Milton Herbert Gropper. Produced by David Belasco at the Lyceum Theatre December 23, with the following cast:

Calvin King, H. Dudley Hawley; Tom Standish, Vernon Steele; Jerry Strong, James Kirkwood; Kay Beatty, Beth Merrill; Phillips, Bernard J. McOwen; Claire Standish, Kay Strozzi; Dot Miller, Edna Hibbard; Frank Forbes, Robert E. O'Connor; Andrew Kenney, John Carmody; Daddy Palmer, Thomas Reynolds; A Waitress, Allyn Gillyn; A Head Waiter, Jose Yovin.

NEW YORK audiences, during recent seasons, have grown cynical and hardened listening to filth in the theatre. Plays reeking with eroticism—situations grossly suggestive, language foul and blasphemous—have been flung on the local stage one after another, apparently with only one purpose in view—to catch the careless crowd. Each time this theatrical garbage has been emptied on the boards, offending the public nostrils with its stench of decay and

corruption, Broadway has exclaimed: "Surely the limit has been reached. Indecency and effrontery can go no further." But Broadway was mistaken. We had not yet seen *Ladies of the Evening,* a coarse, lurid play of New York underworld life that, for sheer audacity of dialogue and situations, made an audience of sophisticated theatregoers gasp as they never gasped before.

Until now these Paphian exhibitions have been exploited only by managers of the second and third class. Our leading producers have consistently declined to pander to the coarse instincts of the lecherously minded. The present program announces Mr. Belasco as producer of the play, but I, for one, refuse to believe that the dean of American producers, the manager whom we know as the standard-bearer of the best traditions of the American stage, would lend his name to a piece of this character. The probability is that while the gentle Dave was away from his office being decorated by the French Government with the Cross of the Legion of Honor for his long and faithful services to dramatic art, some brazen wight in his employ stole his clerical collar and, impudently impersonating "the Gov'nor," put on this play without his knowledge or consent. At least, let's give him the benefit of the doubt.

There was absolutely no excuse for *Ladies of the Evening.* The play is not only disgusting in the intimate details it reveals of the life of a prostitute, but certain of its scenes are actually nauseating in their unveiled coarseness and salaciousness. Could anything be more revolting than that scene in the first act where the street-walker, who has taken the hero up to her squalid room and is surprised he will have nothing to do with her, urges him to get busy, as time presses and she must get back to her beat; or the scene in Act II, where the two trollops, at their wits' end to pay their hotel bill, telephone the adjoining rooms, enticing strange men to come over "for a good time"?

Written in the language of the gutter, the piece is a tawdry, cheap, sensational melodrama. Briefly outlined, the story is this: Three men sitting at their club window, commenting on the women that pass, end by discussing street-walkers. One of them—Jerry, a sculptor and idealist—argues that a prostitute is merely a victim of circumstances and could be saved if helped to a different environment. He has a mind to try. His cynical friends scoff at his theories, declare his experiment will surely fail and propose a bet, which Jerry accepts. The next scene shows the sordid room in the cheap hotel, where Jerry amazes Kay, the street-walker, by ignoring her charms and offering her a job as a model. Seven months pass. Kay, spiritually uplifted, now lives in the sculptor's studio. She has given up her fast living and bad companions and, of course, is head over heels in love with her saint-like employer. But the villain still pursues her in the persons of the clubman, Standish, who "wants her body," as he frankly puts it, and Dot, a tough little member of the frail sisterhood. The latter, after imbibing too freely of post-war hooch, tells Kay that Jerry is not sincere in trying to make her a good girl, that she is only the victim of a sporting bet. Furious at being tricked, Kay throws good resolutions to the winds and goes back to the old life. Jerry, heart-broken, finally finds her working as a waitress. Tears, explanations and marriage bells. Blah!

The play, as may be seen, is utter rubbish. Its pretense to a humanitarian altruism is shallow and unconvincing. The proposition that a bad woman can be reclaimed from the abyss by kind treatment and a more wholesome environment is not in itself unsuitable dramatic material. Instances of such social rehabilitation may be rare, but they are not impossible. It is a theme that, treated honestly and expertly, might make an effective play. But in the present instance there is no attempt to treat it with either intelligence or sincerity.

The acting, it need hardly be said, was superior to the play. Beth Merrill played the street-walker with almost photographic attention to unsavory detail and Edna Hubbard was scandalously amusing as the tough, whisky-stewed Dot. James Kirkwood was somewhat heavy as the priggish and quite impossible sculptor. Robert O'Connor and Frank Carmody, as two country rubes out for a good time and willing to spend their rolls on the girls, contributed the only genuine laughs of the evening.

Old English

Play in three acts by John Galsworthy. Produced by Winthrop Ames at the Ritz Theatre on December 23, with the following cast:

Sylvanus Heythorp, George Arliss; Gilbert Farney, Frederick Earle; Bob Pillin, Deering Wells; Charles Ventnor, Stafford Dickens; Mr. Brownbee, Norman Cannon; Clergyman, Eustace Wyatt; Rosamund Larne, Irby Marshall; Phyllis, Cecile Dixon; Jock, George Walcott; Joseph Pillin, Ivan F. Simpson; Adela Haythorp, Ethel Griffies; Two Clerks, Edmund George and Victor Weston; A Director, Langford Hayes; Mr. Batterson, James Hughes; Mr. Westgate, Horace Cooper; Mr. Winkley, M. Murray Stephens; Mr. Budgeon, Arthur Villars; Mr. Appleby, Thomas Donnelly; Letty, Henrietta Goodwin; Meller, Henry Morrell; Molly, Molly Johnson.

JOHN GALSWORTHY'S *Old English,* a play of distinction, affords George Arliss a capital opportunity to display his versatile talent. He has the rôle of an old stoic, a chairman of a navigation company, who, though over eighty, and so feeble in body that he cannot arise from his chair without help, rules with a clear head and an iron hand. Here is what the Christian Scientists term "the triumph of mind over matter." The rôle is of the type over which any actor, no matter what his triumphs of the past, would grow ecstatic.

Mr. Arliss likes it, and no mistake. It affords many thrilling dramatic moments, swift changes of mood, subtle revelations of character and temperament. Sometimes Old English is just a feeble old man, weary at the end of the long stretch of years. Sometimes his active mind rises above the oppression of the body, and as he addresses the board meeting, after being taunted for his physical disabilities, vibrates with young ire. He has his tender moments when communing with the granddaughter of his illegitimate son, for the old man's past is also colored with gay philandering. And he has his crotchety spells, when annoyed by his prudish and sanctimonious old-maid legitimate daughter. Then there is the opportunity for pathos and tragedy when, discovered putting over a shady deal for his illegitimate encumbrances, he drinks himself to death rather than face disgrace.

Almost any good actor could do justice to a sublime rôle like this. Needless to say, Mr. Arliss handled it with much finesse and excellent shading of mood and line. The crisp dialogue of the play made his work comparatively easy.

The best support was given by Ivan F. Simpson, an old pessimist, Old English's contemporary. But the company generally effected good team-work, and even on the opening night everything went off smoothly.

Galsworthy's play is unusual and distinctive and should prove a delightful contrast to the jazzy musical comedies, the gorgeous but monotonous revues and the bedroom farces which usually rule Broadway. It is a dish for epicures of the theatre.

Topsy and Eva

Musical comedy in three acts. Book by Catherine Chisholm Cushing. Music and lyrics by the Duncan Sisters. Produced by Tom Wilkes at the Sam Harris Theatre on December 23, with the following principals:

Chloe, Aimee Torriani; Harry, Glory Minehart; Uncle Tom, Basil Ruysdael; George Shelby, Robert Halliday; Mrs. Shelby, Helen Case; Augustine St. Clare, Wilbur Cushman; Henrique, Harriet Hoctor; Simon Legree, Frank K. Wallace; Gee Gee, Davis Goodman; Eliza, Florence Martin; Mariette, Nydia D'Arnell; Erasmus Marks, Ashley Cooper; Ophelia St. Clare, Myrtle Ferguson; Topsy, Rosetta Duncan; Eva St. Clare, Vivian Duncan; Danseuse Première, Harriet Hoctor; Rastus, Ross Himes.

IN this musical version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* the bad little Topsy holds center stage. All of the dancing and singing and comedy are incidental to her impish pranks. Good little Eva is merely a feeder for her. The Duncan Sisters, who, judging from the wild applause which trails their every line or movement, have an enormous following, handle the title-rôles in Catherine Chisholm Cushing's rather novel musical rehash of the familiar story.

Rosetta Duncan is Topsy, a little female-minstrel sort of Topsy. She is refreshingly natural in all her cavortings, and the audience keeps her on the stage as long as possible. During her encore number, "When it's sweet onion time in Bermuda," she climbs over the footlights and passes out the tiny scallions, much to the amusement of an audience accustomed to having roses tossed at a time like this.

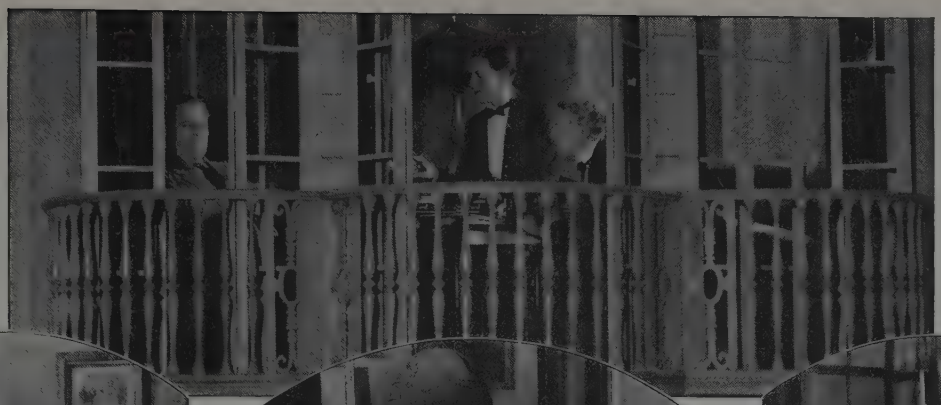
There is a certain amount of novelty attached to the idea of seeing slaves dance to the crack of Simon Legree's whip and to watch little Eva get up from a dead faint and start to jazz. In addition to the fun-making of the Duncan Sisters, the real high lights are the singing of Basil Ruysdale, bass barytone, in the rôle of Uncle Tom, and the beautifully rhythmic dancing of the piccaninny chorus, the London Palace Theatre dancers.

Mrs. Partridge Presents

Comedy in three acts by Mary Kennedy and Ruth Hawthorne. Produced by Guthrie McClintic at the Belmont Theatre January 5, with the following cast:

Ellen, Augusta Haviland; Philip Partridge, Edward Emery, Jr.; Delight Partridge, Sylvia Field; Stephen Applegate, Charles Waldron; Maisie Partridge, Blanche Bates; Katherine Everitt, Ruth Gordon; Sydney Armstead, Elliot Cabot; Charles Ludlow, C. Haviland Chappell; Clementine, Elaine Ivans; Miss Hamilton, Virginia Chauvenet; Pete, Wm. Worthington; Sam, Edwin H. Morse.

THOUGH this new comedy by two new playwrights, Mary Kennedy and Ruth Hawthorne, is another new-old generation play,



(Second row, center)
Kay tells Dot, her former associate *(Edna Hibbard)*, she'll never go back to the old life, but Dot tells her of the wager

Jerry, the sculptor *(James Kirkwood)*, makes a wager with his club friends that by kind treatment he can save a woman of the street

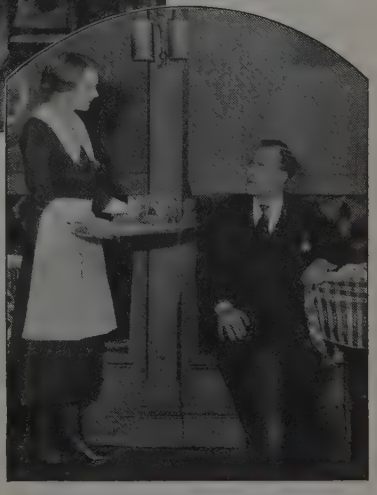
Kay *(Beth Merrill)* entices Jerry to her sordid lodging, but he astonishes her by offering her a job

Now Jerry's model, the former courtisane, realizes she has fallen in love with her benefactor

Photos White, N. Y.

Furious at being tricked, Kay returns to the old life and helps Dot work the hotels, inducing sporty hayseeds to pay their expenses

Jerry demands an explanation for Kay's desertion, but she refuses to answer and disappears



Jerry finds Kay earning a decent living as a waitress, and reconciliation follows

"LADIES OF THE EVENING" AT THE LYCEUM

Hectic Play of New York's Underworld the Season's Sensation

Tony (*Richard Bennett*) is all enthusiasm in view of the coming of his young bride, but Father McKee (*Charles Kennedy*) tells him he is making a mistake

Joe (*Glenn Anders*) receives Amy, the bride (*Pauline Lord*), during Tony's absence, and she tells him the old Italian vine cultivator sent the younger man's picture instead of his own

(*Below*) Overwhelmed at the misery and shame she has brought to the old man who loved her so well, Amy tells Joe he must go

Discovering that he has been duped and that Amy has been unfaithful to her marriage vows, Tony, in a fit of fury, seizes a rifle and tries to shoot Joe

Photos Bruguière

Moved by compassion, Amy tells Tony she will never be anything but a good wife, and Joe goes out of her life forever

"THEY KNEW WHAT THEY WANTED" AT THE GARRICK THEATRE

Strong, But Somewhat Unsavory, Play of the California Vineyards by an American Author

it has a distinctly novel treatment. Its dialogue is the genuine conversation exchanged between real human beings. The problems which arise are those of men and women harassed by the same trials which confront all of us.

The protagonist of the older generation is the forceful Mrs. Partridge, who tries to direct the destinies of her young son and daughter. She has the mother complex in an aggravated form. She believes that the one real possession of value in life is independence. So she chooses art for her son, the stage for her daughter, regardless of their natural aptitude for these professions. The younger generation's reaction to her high-handed methods are not what the mother expects.

An older and a less sure Blanche Bates returns to Broadway in this entertaining comedy. Her evident nervousness sometimes betrayed itself in the way she spoke her lines. Something of the rich humanness of the strong, yet infinitely tender mother, was destroyed by the touch of acrimony which Miss Bates gave it.

The rôle of a chattering flapper is made a perfect creation by Ruth Gordon. This ingénue part might have been only an amusing bit if it had fallen to the lot of some one else. As this clever young actress draws the character, it stands out from all the other rôles in the cast. She made the little feather-brain an appealing and wistful creature, living a vicarious love affair because her own dominating parents suppressed her and prevented her from having one of her own. Every line she spoke caused laughter, but it was the kind of laughter which is tempered with understanding of the pathos of the stupid little flapper's plight. It takes real talent to convey this feeling in a rôle of this kind.

There was also some excellent emotional acting by Sylvia Field, another young actress in the cast, who plays the rôle of the daughter, torn between love and a career.

Processional

Play in four acts by John Howard Lawson. Produced by the Theatre Guild at the Garrick Theatre January 12, with the following cast:

Boob Elkins, Ben Grauer; Isaac Cohen, Philip Loeb; Sadie Cohen, June Walker; Jake Psinski, Charles Halton; Pop Pratt, William T. Hays; MacCarthy, Carl Eckstrom; Bill, Alan Ward; Phillpots, Donald MacDonald; The Sheriff, Redfield Clarke; A Man in a Silk Hat, William F. Canfield; Old Maggie, Patricia Barclay; Mrs. Euphemia Stewart Flimmins, Blanche Frederici; Dynamite Jim, George Abbott; Rastus, Samuel L. Manning; Slop, Robert Collyer; Smith, Stanley Lindahl.

JAZZED drama! To-day we live on jazz. Jazz with our meals, jazzing lights on Broadway, jazzed literature, jazzed weddings, jazzed funerals, mourners in fast autos jazzing their way merrily to the cemeteries. Why not jazzed drama? In the theatre, as elsewhere, everything topsyturvy. The old dramatic formulas thrown on the scrap-heap as outworn and old-school. Experimentation, a stirring of the social cesspools, the order of the day. Nothing too weird, too daring, too freakish. Attract attention, no matter how. Go the limit, so you may be credited with genius. Astound, shock, thrill. *De l'audace! Toujours de l'audace!*

A dramatic nightmare—a foretaste of what, with its present-day tendencies towards the morbid, the erotic and the bizarre, the theatre threatens soon to become—that is *Processional*, a so-called "jazz symphony of American life" which the Theatre Guild, in furtherance of its policy of staging unusual plays, recently presented at the Garrick.

As a very necessary explanatory note on the program informs the bewildered spectator, *Processional* is "a new form in the American theatre, combining the method of the burlesque show with the legitimate form, keying them both to a jazz *tempo*. . . . The author feels jazz as the typical rhythm of American life against which many of the most poignant tragedies are often played."

Into the story of a coal strike in a small town of West Virginia are fused the figures of burlesque—the comedy Jewish storekeeper, the moving-picture sheriff, the musical-comedy soldiers, the black-faced minstrel of the musical halls. All these characters have their place in an action that is half parody, half drama. The dominant note is noise and confusion. There is shooting and flag waving, murder, violence, rape. A smug employer in spats and a silk hat. Strikers parading with their band. A newsboy. A crippled Civil War veteran. Grimy, blasphemous workers. Bedraggled, frowsy women. Hooded members of the Ku Klux Klan. All jumbled together in a bewildering, incoherent plot with the crazy, nerve-racking jazz strains ever in the background.

This curious *potpourri* of human passions and slap-stick farce the playwright declares symbolical of present-day life. In a way he is right. Preposterous, extravagant as may be the picture, the vital fact driven home does not fail to register. From this point of view *Processional* strikes a true-enough note. The play is an indictment of the world's present-day existence—careless, lawless, frivolous. Nothing taken seriously. Men and women working, loving, stealing, killing, dying—all to the tune of jazz.

There are moments when the piece rises to heights of sheer beauty—for example, the scenes between Dynamite Jim and Sadie, admirably played by George Abbott and June Walker, during and at the culmination of their violent romance. Other passages are deliciously ironic. But, on the whole, the play is decidedly unpleasant. It is a futile, pretentious striving after effect. A genius might have risen to it and given us something really worth while. But apparently it was beyond the power of this author.

Processional may be an impressionistic study of one phase of our national life. Happily there is another side to the picture—not so hopelessly involved in jazz complex. If there were not, we should soon all be in the madhouse.

The Youngest

Comedy in three acts by Philip Barry. Produced by Robert Milton, Inc., at the Gaiety Theatre January 5, with the following cast:

Charlotte Winslow, Effie Shannon; Oliver Winslow, Paul Harvey; Mark Winslow, Robert Strange; Augusta Winslow Martin, Verree Teasdale; Alan Martin, Walker Ellis; Martha Winslow, Katherine Alexander; Richard Winslow, Henry Hull; Nancy Blake, Genevieve Tobin; Katie, Alice John.

WHILE this play, by the author of the successful *You and I*, will not make any great appeal to the *intelligentsia*, the under-dog may derive from it crumbs of comfort. Most of us, at some time or other, have felt the heavy hand of tyranny. This piece glorifies the worm who, goaded beyond endurance, at last turns upon his tormentors with smashing results. It is another set of family brawls dramatized. *The Show-Off*, *The Sap* and *The Youngest* are all somewhat of the same kidney. Stupid and downtrodden in the first act, the hero is crowned king in the last. The Show-Off is the original prize boob. His success caused a lot of simpletons to trail in his wake.

The youngest of the Winslow family is good-hearted, a bit eccentric and spineless. He is kicked around by the more dominant members of his family until he is as limp as a wet wash-rag. A clever young girl visits the family and, with an almost uncanny intuition for one so young, gets the low-down on the whole situation in the time it takes to blink an eyelash. She sets out to remedy matters, finds a weapon for the young jelly-fish, and he uses it effectively. Soon the browbeaters of his family are eating out of his hand.

Henry Hull is breezy and explosive in speech as usual in the title-rôle and on the whole gives a satisfactory performance. Genevieve Tobin, as the string-pulling Bunty, is so theatric that she destroys all sense of illusion. She hasn't a single natural pose, gesture or inflection of the voice. Effie Shannon has little to do but look picturesque in a stunning black velvet gown.

The costuming of this second venture of Robert Milton's is handsomely done. The play itself is one of those pleasant little entertainments which leave scarcely a ripple on the season's dramatic waters and yet may land a success.

Big Boy

Musical comedy in two acts. Music by James F. Hanley and Joseph Meyer. Lyrics by Bud G. De Sylva. Produced by Lee and J. J. Shubert at the Winter Garden January 7, with the following cast:

Mrs. Bedford, Maude Turner Gordon; Phyllis Carter, Edythe Baker; Joe Warren, Hugh Banks; Tessie Forbes, Flo Lewis; Annabelle Bedford, Patti Harrold; Jack Bedford, Frank Beaston; "Coley" Reid, Ralph Whitehead; "Doc," Leo Donnelly; Jim Redding, Franklyn Batie; Judkins, George Gilday; Steve Leslie, Colin Campbell; Gus, Al Jolson; Caroline Purdy, Edith Scott; "Bully" John Bagby, William L. Thorne; "Silent" Ransom, George Spelvin; Tucker, Franklyn Batie; Manager, L. C. Sherman; Wainwright, William L. Thorne; Legrande, William Bonelli; Danny, Irving Carter; Mr. Gray, Charles Moran; Dolly Graham, Frankie Jaames; Tout, Charles Moran.

AL JOLSON has what Broadway wants, and he gives it to them with a zest in this speedy race-track musical comedy. Jolson knows better, perhaps, than any other comedian exactly the sort of material that will go over with a bang. He is master of the sly innuendo, the knowing wink, the sophisticated wise-crack. Everything he says or does meets with almost instant approbation. There is a primitive rhythm about his songs and dances, a punch to his delivery of lines, a gay *camaraderie* about his personality which assures him personal popularity, no matter in what kind of a play he appears.

Big Boy, however, is the type of musical comedy that achieves success on its own account. It has quick action, a sprightly and hard-working chorus and good music, with the always peppy Alfred Goodman directing the orchestra. The flashback of the old plantation in the year 1870 could well be omitted. It is long drawn out and dull, with the exception of the singing and playing of the Negro spirituals by a chorus

(*Continued on page* 62)

Play of Sea-Lure Captures London

New Bills in the Theatres. Successful Revival of Sheridan's "The Duenna." Shakespeare at Drury Lane

By J. T. GREIN

"Theatre Magazine's" Special Correspondent

LONDON, *January 15, 1925.*

THE new year finds new bills in most of the theatres. *Storm,* that biting and brilliant satire of Mr. C. K. Munro; *Tiger Cats,* the play of Madame Karen Bramson, which drew all London to see Miss Edith Evans as the vampire; *In the Next Room,* that first-rate thrill which kept us guessing to the end, have all finished their innings and made good scores. *Our Betters,* Mr. W. Somerset Maugham's sparkling and *risqué* comedy, is in its second year and is still "not out." *Fata Morgana, White Cargo, The Fool, Diplomacy* and *The Farmer's Wife* are still at the wicket. *The Nervous Wreck* seems to have turned its lodging at the St. James into a home and plans are now mature for sending it out on tour.

There have been failures, and this time their fate was deserved. Mr. Laurence Cowen opened a new theatre, The Fortune, to present his play, *Sinners.* It is a beautiful little building of ferro-concrete, set on a historic site in "Old Drury," bearing a historic name hallowed with Elizabethan memories and equipped with every modern device, including the Schwabe-Hasait lighting. But what a play—neither fish nor fowl nor good red herring. Laughter, ironical, gave it its *congé,* and to-day the doors are shut. Mr. Matheson Lang had little better luck with *The Hour and the Man,* and I was sorry to see this fine, romantic actor struggling to put life into Mr. Frank Stayton's cardboard Mussolini.

AT the Haymarket, Mr. Norman McKinnel gives such compelling presence to Mr. Galsworthy's dogged pagan, *Old English,* that his portrait study is the talk of the town. At the Ambassador's Miss Josephine Victor, whose accent and name we did not know, has triumphed as the pelican mother. Captain Harwood's interesting drama, *The Pelican,* written in collaboration with his wife, the well-known novelist, F. Tennyson Jesse, has a topical history which gives it pertinence, while his matinée revival of *A Grain of Mustard Seed,* that splendid post-war comedy, reveals him as a playwright dexterous in stagecraft and gifted with a sharp epigrammatic wit and a clear sense of character. The outstanding popular success among the dramatists in our theatre to-day is Mr. Temple Thurston. His *Wandering Jew* has proved a trump-card revival for Mr. Lang, while *The Blue Peter* has so captured our fancy that the new play is likely to weather many a gale.

Josephine Victor (seated at table), well-known Broadway actress, scores a big hit in the rôle of the mother in the London production of *The Pelican*

Romance is an argosy with silken sails and a "Blue Peter" fluttering on the foremast. Realism is a grimy steam tramp with a smoking funnel. But we love to look out of "magic casements on perilous seas forlorn," and so we escape out of fact into fantasy. *The Blue Peter* is a tale of a strong man with the call of the sea in his blood. He is tired of home and clockwork conventions. So on a Christmas Eve he decides to sail forth, to breathe the air of adventure and shake off the dull, monotonous ways of landlubbers. And in the tavern, where the air reeks of baccy and whisky and the shrill note of the siren comes from over the water, he meets another siren, a tavern girl. Yes, we've got the atmosphere, the Stevensonian note of wildness that touches every boy and girl heart among us, crusted as it is beneath layers of civilized dress. Can we wonder that he gives way to the spell? But glad are we that he wakes before it is too late. For at home is a dear, devoted, docile wife and a Christmas tree. It is true he had written in his haste a note of farewell, and now must he repent at leisure, for he decided to go back home. But she understood. Down in the depths of her simple heart was a dream of love and freedom. So she did not flout him. She gave him welcome, and he, wise man, found a richer gold at home than any dross hidden for pirates to find. And home is never more wonderful than at Christmastide. The charming idyl closes like a fairy-tale. *The Blue Peter* has crossed the perilous seas safely, for the chart of Love was in the cabin, and we leave these twain happy ever after.

It is all so simple, so fragrant and so human too. Mr. Temple Thurston has a pretty sentiment, and when he pictures for us the fantasy of things that might be and leaves the hard reality of things that are, he is happiest. His dialogue has flavor and his cunning effects create mood. And he has been very fortunate in his hero. George Tully makes him live. We can believe in him. It is a small wonder that the pennant of *The Blue Peter* wafts over full houses. It has gone from the Princess to the Royalty, and this charming play will please the jaded Londoner for a long while. Do we not all love a fairy-tale?

IF this were the only record, I should hide in shame. It is a poverty-stricken list, for success is no criterion of quality. But I am no pessimist, and I see promise of a wonderful third act in our theatrical season. At the little Everyman, one of our most versatile and brilliantly clever young men, Mr. Noel Coward, has written, produced and acts in a striking play, *The Vortex.* This study of butterfly life has tragic intensity and its dénouement is a stroke of genius. At the Lyric, Hammersmith, that past master of revivals, Mr. Nigel Playfair, has put on Sheridan's *The Duenna* and, to the accompaniment of flute and strings, we bask in the sunshine of beauty and delight.

The "Old Vic" lives up to its reputation as The Home of Shakespeare. Now we are all agog because Mr. Basil Dean is going to take the reproach away that we never have the "Master's" plays in the West End, for he is putting on *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* at Drury Lane. What a production! What a cast! Miss Edith Evans, Miss Athene Seyler, our two best comédiennes; Mr. Hay Petrie, the most delicious of Shakespearian fools, and perhaps, if *The Fool* can spare him, Mr. Henry Ainley.

(*Continued on page* 56)

Abbé

MARGUERITE NAMARA

American Prima Donna, Who After Many Triumphs at the Paris Opéra Comique, Has Recrossed the Atlantic to Charm Broadway With Her Exotic Beauty and Lovely Voice

WALTER HAMPDEN AS OTHELLO

ACT IV. OTHELLO: *Let me see your eyes; look in my face.*
DESDEMONA: *Upon my knees, what doth thy speech import? I understand a fury in your words, but not the words.*

Drawing by Henriette Dallett

The Guardsman and His Wife

Tea-time At the Lunts'—An Intimate Study of a Happy Stage Marriage

By ADA PATTERSON

TALL, with swinging shoulders and eyes that imprisoned a boyish sparkle, a young man looked across the tea-table in a smart studio apartment at a smaller, plumper young woman with a noticeably broad, smooth brow, brown eyes steadier than his own and a mouth that, to use a current poet's phrase about the wife he since has divorced, "curves deliciously." He called her "Betsy" and she addressed him as "Bill." On the theatre programs and in the life that lies beyond the theatre more stately names have accrued to them. Alfred Lunt, he, and Lynn Fontanne, she. Like the pair they play in *The Guardsman,* they are husband and wife, but unlike them, gaunt differences do not walk between.

"The happy Lunts," their friends call them. Joyous chums they, though the blending of the two strong stage personalities had an inauspicious beginning. "The first time I saw her she had a red nose and looked like the devil. She was playing a reluctant bride in *The Wooing of Eve.* I thought she was a blanked good actress, but I had no yearning to see such a sob sister again. Surely not off the stage. But when I did meet her face to face in proper person, I was so smitten that I fell downstairs. You wore a long gray cloak and a little close gray hat. Remember?" *The Guardsman* in private life inquired of the calm young woman who was pouring tea for us.

Vandamm

The happy Lunts their friends call them. Joyous chums they, through the blending of two strong stage personalities

COURTSHIP BETWEEN ACTS

"I HAVE no recollection of that portentous meeting. I am glad you don't hold me accountable for a broken leg. Cream or lemon? But we are quits, for I met him once at some London crush and he won't even remember it. The time we did meet, which both remember, was when I went up to him on the stage and introduced myself. I had to ask him about some business in a scene we were to play together in a stock tryout of several plays in Washington. 'Mr. Lunt,' I said, 'I am Lynn Fontanne.' He was sitting with a lot of books in his lap. He got up and all the books fell with a crash."

"We got on remarkably well, though," interrupted the guardsman. "In three days we were driving about the streets of Washington, hearing each other's rôles. It was the only time we had. For we rehearsed in the morning and played every afternoon and evening. Two weeks after I saw her first and fell down the stairs at her feet I proposed."

"But fate in the guise of the cruel manager separated us." Mrs. Lunt pressed another raspberry-jam sandwich upon me. "I was to have played in *Clarence,* in which he played the name rôle. Then it was decided that I should go on tour in another play, and Mary Boland was engaged for the part I was to have played with him. The manager, George C. Tyler, organized tryouts of a half-dozen plays in which he saw possibilities. We heard the plays read on the stage of the Hudson Theatre in New York before leaving town. It was there that this person thinks he fell downstairs at sight of me."

"I did." The man whom Cupid tripped held forth his cup for another filling.

"I will confess," said the calm young woman, "that while I was sitting in the orchestra with the director and heard some one on the stage read a speech, I fell in love with the speaker's voice. I asked, 'Who is it that reads so well?' The director answered: 'That is Alfred Lunt.' I have never changed my mind. I still think that he has the most beautiful speaking voice I ever heard."

Their companies went in opposite directions. Miss Fontanne's *Made of Money* came quickly back into port. It was reported waterlogged and put out of commission, while *Clarence* rode proudly on the crest for two years.

The English girl, Ellen Terry's pupil and Laurette Taylor's protégée in this country, and the youth born in Wisconsin, but trained on the Scandinavian stage, met occasionally in the management's home office and at the homes of friends. Occasionally he referred to his second-week proposal. He talked often of the farm in Wisconsin. Wouldn't she like to pay a visit to it and to his mother and small sisters?

She would. And did. The telegraph operator made a mistake in the date. When Miss Fontanne arrived at the station in Milwaukee, only strange farmers and stranger politicians ran past her, but none stopped to look and none looked like "Bill."

She took the suburban train to the Ecklunt home—for Ecklunt it is in Wisconsin. It was Broadway that sheared it of its first syllable—and up the car-steps swung a tall young rustic in a battered straw hat. He was coatless and might as better have been hatless. He was leading two freckled, super-animated little girls aboard. Half-way down the aisle he saw her. The wreck of a hat came off.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "We didn't expect you until to-morrow. These are my sisters. I have been taking them to the circus."

"It was a bit of a shock," said Lynn Fontanne. "One of the reasons I had admired him was that he was always correctly dressed. He wore his clothes well. They were good clothes. This person in ancient, faded trousers and an unspeakable hat did not seem the same."

"But the next day I recovered the ground I had lost," he boasted. They were having maid troubles and he cooked the breakfast.

"It was a good breakfast," Miss Fontanne smiled. "I concluded that such a breakfast and a few other things are the essentials of life. The tailored excellences that I missed were non-essentials."

THE GUARDSMAN'S REAL MARRIAGE

ON that visit the engagement that had been skirted and more or less shunned was again approached and became an achieved fact. They were married while she was playing in *Dulcy* and he was leading man for Billie Burke in *The Intimate Stranger.* A week later the bride left town on a long tour of *Dulcy.*

I expected to hear of two letters a day. There were none.

"We never write letters," said the dark-eyed woman across the tea-table. "I hate writing them, and we should soon hate each other if they were demanded. We telephone when we are within reasonable distance of each other. And we telegraph perhaps three times a week. But letters? We both loathe them!"

The guardsman nodded an acquiescent smile.

(*Continued on page* 52)

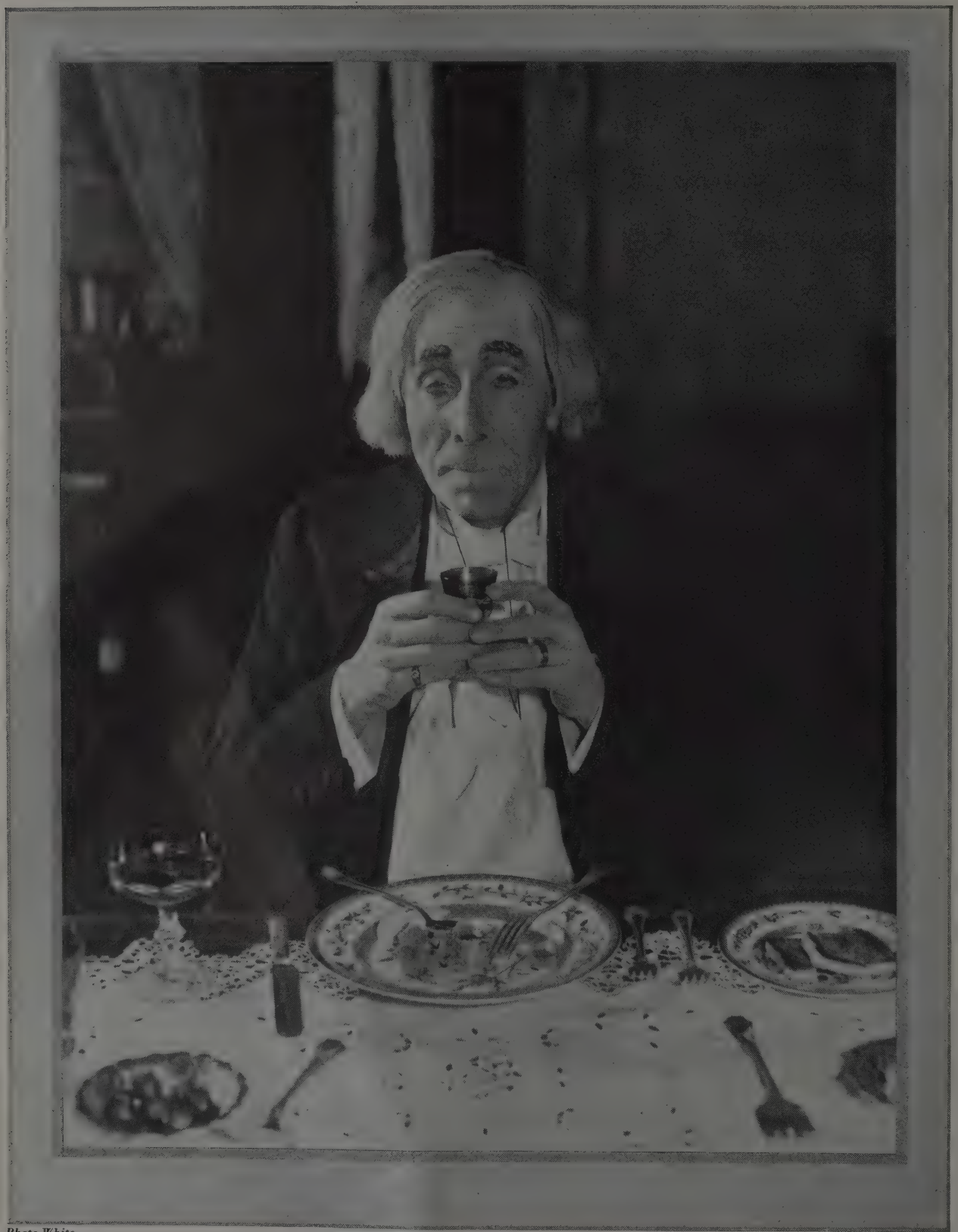


Photo White

As the "Grand Old Gentleman" in Galsworthy's Latest Play "Old English", George Arliss Adds Another Masterly Characterization to His Already Brilliant Gallery

CONFESSIONS OF A PLAYWRIGHT

"A Possible Case." Mr. Palmer and the Union Square Theatre. Overtures for "The Senator"

By SYDNEY ROSENFELD

THE success of *The Lady or the Tiger* gave me confidence in my powers of invention, and I now turned my attention to the writing of an entirely original comedy. Hitherto, with the exception of the early one-act plays that I had sold to De Witt for publication, my principal comedy writing had been in connection with adaptations of foreign plays.

I thought the theme of the diversity in our divorce laws would be a suitable one for dramatic purposes, and I wrote *A Possible Case,* which, when it was finally produced, justified the effort in every way—I mean the effort made both in the writing and the selling of it. I had read the play to several managers before it was accepted. Among those who declined it were A. M. Palmer and Daniel Frohman.

I cannot over emphasize the superb array of artists which in the eighties comprised the great Union Square Theatre Company under the management of A. M. Palmer. The Union Square Theatre on Fourteenth Street, just east of Broadway, still exists as a playhouse, but its glory has faded. It is now the abode of only the cheapest kind of vaudeville and movies. When Palmer had it he gave to theatregoers an exhibition of grace and skill in the actors that has never been excelled. Charles Thorne was the leading man, Rose Eytinge the leading woman and the company comprised James O'Neill, Stuart Robson, J. H. Stoddard, McKee Rankin, Richard Mansfield, Kate Claxton, Sara Jewett, Fanny Morant, Mrs. Wilkins, F. F. Mackay (who died not long ago in his ninetieth year) and for special engagements the great and only Clara Morris.

THERE were at this time only two other stock companies, Wallack's, then located at the corner of Thirteenth Street and Broadway, and Daly's, at the Fifth Avenue Theatre on Twenty-fourth Street. The Fifth Avenue was always a misnomer, for, though Daly called several theatres by that name, none was ever situated on Fifth Avenue.

Daly's idea of a Fifth Avenue Theatre was one that should appeal to the society element—the "Fifth Avenue set"—so to speak. His first Fifth Avenue Theatre was a little bandbox of a playhouse on Twenty-fourth Street, west of Broadway, where he won his first fame as a director and where he electrified New Yorkers with their first introduction to Clara Morris. When this Fifth Avenue Theatre was destroyed by fire he leased some property at 728 Broadway, near Eighth Street. It became the second Fifth Avenue Theatre. Then he built what is now Proctor's, at the corner of Twenty-eighth Street and Broadway, and made it the arena for his most ambitious efforts. Here his fortunes declined and he gave up management for a time, but he soon rallied and finally converted an old barn of a place that was

A rehearsal of *The Mocking Bird,* showing Mabelle Gilman, the prima donna, and its author, Sydney Rosenfeld, going over the manuscript

Wood's Museum, on Broadway near Thirtieth Street, into the most elegant theatre of all, this time calling it simply and frankly "Daly's Theatre."

He there had the satisfaction of regaining his wealth and giving an example of rehabilitation only equaled by Mark Twain's winning of his second fortune.

Augustin Daly's is too great a name in the theatre world to be dealt with in a few lines. I shall meet him in very close business relations after I have dealt with his friendly rival, Mr. Palmer.

Alas for those departed days of resident companies in a repertory of plays! They have never returned. The syndicates which now control the theatres occupied by companies specially engaged for each new production may have succeeded in demonstrating greater commercial values for the theatrical speculators, but they have certainly robbed the theatre of much of its artistic value and more of the atmosphere that was prevalent in those days.

Palmer's vast organization represented a great number of temperamental performers, and when we stop to think how very ungovernable the human temperament becomes under pressure, I can but be awed by that suave power of the director who was able to keep so many temperaments under control.

ROSE EYTINGE was the leading lady. She was not only a beautiful woman, but a brilliant one. She must have been nearly forty when I first saw her act. She was of Jewish ancestry, but whether in spite of that fact or on account of it, had a singular charm of face and form. But she was not very tractable. Charles Thorne, the leading man, was a fine actor, but temperamentally a perfect antithesis to Rose. These two achieved their results by totally different methods. Where Rose Eytinge was intellectual or analytical, Thorne, a man of comparatively little culture or learning, but with an instinctive gift of acting, was forceful and spontaneous. There were many clashes between these two. Jealous of each other's privileges as leading members of this brilliant organization, each was quick to resent even the appearance of encroachment on the part of the other in his or her domain. On one particular occasion Rose snapped at Charles with unexpected vigor.

"I won't stand for that, Charley!" she said to him so aggressively that Thorne protested: "Don't bite my head off, Rose." To which the lady instantly retorted: "My religion forbids it; I don't eat pork!"

As we read down the list of Palmer's roster and realize how many of these artists became successful stars, we shall willingly concede this to have been a truly brilliant array.

Charles Thorne's fine talents were freely proclaimed by the press. They credited him with being the founder of a new school of acting, which they called "Suppressed Emotion," and that expression came to be generally adopted in the profession. Where hitherto the customary leading man, rising to a situation, would increase the volume of his tone, Thorne would subdue his voice and become at times even more than ordinarily colloquial. This was all very well for Thorne, for the critics knew that he had plenty of reserve force behind his suppression and if he chose could rend the air with his vigor, so he got a great deal of credit for this trick. (The great Dion Boucicault took him over to London, where his suppressed emotion made an equal impression on the Britishers.) But a great many very mild leading men began to imitate him, men who had no reserve force back of them whatever, and for a time some very feeble efforts were exploited in the name of "suppressed emotion."

NOTE.—The opening chapters of Mr. Rosenfeld's Reminiscences began in our issue for January, 1925.

Even Thorne himself struck a snag every now and then in his efforts at the ultra-colloquial.

Palmer produced a weird and fustian melodrama, of that cheaper sort which has brought the word melodrama into disrepute, called *The Creole.* There occurred a scene in this purely artificial play where the leading man, Thorne, had to rebuke the villain. Now there is nothing the average leading man enjoys so much as to rebuke the villain (or in the stage parlance, "the heavy"). In the stilted language of this play, Thorne, who embodied the scion of a noble house, had to give utterance to this line (which of course called for all the impressive diction he could command): "I am a de Courcay! *Never forget that!*" At the critical moment his fatal fondness for the colloquial overcame him, and he said: "I'm a de Courcay—and don't you forget it!"

The audience screamed. The play would have failed anyway, but this touch was the *coup de grâce.*

I do not wish, in retrospect, to appear wiser than that public who acclaimed Thorne as the first apostle of that suppressed emotion, but it is in a sense of justice to an earlier and perhaps forgotten actor that I wish to relate an experience I had that antedated Thorne.

It was in a little playhouse long since vanished—called "Lina Edwin's Theatre," located in lower Broadway. A play was there on exhibition called *Hunted Down.* It was another of Boucicault's famous renderings from the French. I have only a hazy recollection of what it was all about. I know that the then distinguished Laura Keene played the leading female rôle—the usual erring wife. The husband was played by Frank Mordaunt. A very touching scene occurs in the play where the husband, after the elopement of his wife, is left alone on the stage playing with his prattling child.

A TRAGIC DÉNOUEMENT

GRADUALLY a scene of intense pith and moment develops. He is learning through the artless talk of his child some inculpating facts about the mother. Instead of giving vent to any ebullitions of surprise or resentment, he becomes painfully quiet. His voice is lowered until it is hardly above a whisper. Mr. Mordaunt held that audience in the hollow of his hand. Not the faintest breath of a whisper was lost, and the dénouement was wrought amid a stillness that was more tragic than the fiercest outcry. I never forgot that performance of Frank Mordaunt's.

The child also gave an unbelievably fine performance—but that will not surprise you so much when I tell you her name was Minnie Maddern.

She now illumines the theatre as Mrs. Fiske.

I am here reminded that the first original full-length play I ever attempted was for Minnie Maddern. It was called *The Storm Child,* and crude as the effort was, the charm and skill of that fascinating actress, who stands at the head of her profession, gave it a brief life on the road. I will not interrupt my narrative very long with talking about it. All I need say is that the dear creature for whom it was designed has long since forgiven me for it.

The *personnel* of the Union Square Theatre company was so strong that a book devoted to almost any one of them might be worth writing. So before returning to what might be called my duty as a self-chronicler, I would fain linger a little while longer with the Union Square Theatre company.

Clara Morris played occasional special engagements. She began her meteoric

Elsie Janis, at the age of seventeen, when playing the heroine in Mr. Rosenfeld's play, *The Vanderbilt Cup*

career with Augustin Daly, whose leading lady she was for several seasons. When she left Daly, she, for a while, became visiting guest at other theatres. When she played at the Union Square Theatre she was in poor health, and it was not an infrequent occurrence that after some particularly strenuous scene she would withdraw to the rear of the stage and, in full sight of the audience, take some medical draught to restore her vitality. With any ordinary actress such an interlude might have destroyed all illusion, but the sweep of Clara Morris' art was so great that her audience still remained under the spell.

It was during one of the visits of Clara Morris that I completely lost my heart to the so-called "juvenile lady" of the company. She was Sara Jewett, another recruit from the Daly forces—a frail, winsome, flower-like lady with a soft, appealing voice, lacking in power, but with a poetic note of appeal. She had in one play that exploited the great Morris a scene that gave her her best opportunity. It was a much modernized version of *East Lynne;* not frankly derived from that ancient source, but dealing with the underlying idea of a guilty mother returning to her husband's home as a governess to find another woman installed in her place and mothering her children, to whom she, the true mother, dare not reveal herself. The emotional opportunities of *Miss Multon* (for so the piece was called, after the name of the governess) showed Clara Morris at her best—but the part of the second wife, played by Miss Jewett, had dramatic values of its own. Her best moment was when she encountered Miss Multon. To this scene Sara Jewett rose, but it was not to the art of the actress, but the charm of the woman that I surrendered. This is one of the confidential statements that justify the title I have given to these chronicles. In the calm twilight of maturity I may have to admit that it was only a fleeting youthful fancy, but in those days it seemed neither fleeting nor youthful. I dare say there is hardly a faithful young theatregoer to-day who does not at some time feel overcome by a sort of worshipful adoration for a distant stage idol. In my present twilight I may now make the admission that the adorable Miss Jewett was at the time a few—not many—years older than I, and when I had the ecstasy of finally meeting her, she at once assumed a protective attitude that was akin, if not to motherliness, at least to a well-balanced sisterliness.

Sara Jewett did not live to reach great fame. With better health and continued opportunity, she might have become the Maude Adams of her day.

A NOTABLE FIRST NIGHT

ANOTHER remarkable first night that I witnessed at the Union Square Theatre was that of *A Parisian Romance,* on which occasion a comparatively obscure actor became famous overnight. The character actor (so called) of the company, that sterling artist, Mr. J. H. Stoddard, who had given great performances of a variety of well-remembered parts, had been cast for the *Baron Chevrial*—an old French *roué.* Mr. Stoddard found himself unsuited to the rôle, and Mr. Palmer, aided by his coadjutor, Mr. Cazauran, began a search for a capable substitute for Mr. Stoddard. The Baron was a most important character; in fact, he was the center of interest in the play. There had recently been added to the company a young actor who had just closed an engagement in a comic opera further up-town. He had shown some talent, and he was entrusted—not without some misgivings—with the part of the Baron. His performance proved a revelation, and the papers next morning rang with his praise. That was the turning point in the career of Richard Mansfield.

Among those assigned to the duty of reviewing the play was the present writer. A daily theatrical paper had been started by the late John C. Freund, the first paper of its kind, and like so many first attempts, ahead of its time. I fairly spread myself in its columns in extolling the performance of Mansfield. It led me into something like a close friendship with that actor, but my high opinion of his talent became modified by his subsequent performance of other parts, and I realized that his hit as the Baron was one of those accidental things where the part and the actor's personality become so intertwined that Chance as much as Art contributes to the result. Mansfield was entirely an actor of detail. The Baron was all detail. Where breadth and grandeur and dramatic sweep were required he fell short. Our orbits crossed a few years later when he played a part I had written in Millocker's operetta, *Gasparone.*

Reviewing the list of the Union Square group, it is interesting to note that Richard

Pach

H. B. Warner, whose slick, quite professional performance as the self-sacrificing convict in *Silence* confirms the impression that he is our most plausible crook-actor

Henry Hull, whose versatility has enabled him to play Roman soldiers, fifteenth-century earls and restless twentieth-century juveniles, recently assumed the more homely part of the Cinderella-Boy in *The Youngest*

Mishkin

Lionel Barrymore, drawing a winning hand with *Four Knaves and a Joker*, adds the rôle of bank runner to his gallery of stern heroes and magnificent villains

Goldberg

Monroe

Glenn Anders, who, earlier in the season, strode romantically through the enchanted forest of *Bewitched*, now finds himself equally at home as the roustabout in *They Knew What They Wanted*

George Abbott, an actor of skill and imagination, who changed miraculously from Lazybones, the easy and casual, to Dynamite Jim in *Processional*, the latest Guild production

Goldberg

THE MALE IN THE THEATRE

Leading Men Who Furnish Romance and Thrills in Current Broadway Productions

Mansfield became a prominent star in romantic and classic drama, McKee Rankin toured at the head of his own company in Joaquin Miller's dramatic story of early California days, *The Danites;* J. H. Stoddard starred in *The Bonnie Briar Bush,* by Ian MacLaren; Stuart Robson joined with William H. Crane (under the firm name of Robson and Crane) in a number of comedies that delighted the country for many years. They ended their business partnership with a production of Bronson Howard's best play, *The Henrietta.* All of these names, with the exception of William H. Crane, have passed into history. Crane is now in Hollywood in the semi-idle pursuit of posing for pictures.

DANIEL FROHMAN *LE BIEN AIMÉ*

A. M. PALMER remained at the head of the Union Square Theatre company for several seasons and then retired temporarily. When he returned to the managerial field he took hold of the Madison Square Theatre, on Twenty-fourth Street, which had risen from the ashes of Daly's first abode. Here he established another company of prime excellence, and here he brought to view Augustus Thomas' first important play, *Alabama.* Later on he leased Wallack's Theatre, located at Broadway and Thirtieth Street, and changed its name to Palmer's Theatre. It was, however, while he was in control of the Madison Square that I brought to him *A Possible Case.*

He was a very approachable man and he accorded me the privilege of reading him my play. That is a privilege not accorded to every author. I have made it a point throughout my career to read my own work whenever that has been possible. The sad history of many authors will reveal how many of their manuscripts have come back to them with internal evidence that they never had been read at all.

Of my ability as a play-reader I am reluctant to speak, lest I should corroborate a playful verdict given by some of my envious *confrères* that it was my reading and not their merit that sold my plays. Sarony, the photographer, once told me that I had two profiles, a Greek and a Roman. I made reply that it was the Greek profile that wrote the plays and the Roman that sold them.

Be that as it may, I did not succeed in getting any definite acceptance of *A Possible Case* from Mr. Palmer, and I took my play to Daniel Frohman, by then established as the director of the Lyceum Theatre Company, operating at Fourth Avenue near Twenty-third Street. I thought all my characters would be well adapted to his company.

Daniel Frohman, the well-beloved, was another of those kindly disposed managers whose number is daily thinning. He cherished his actors and they cherished him. I had some difficulty in getting him to listen to my play, and he offered to read it himself without delay and to give me an immediate decision, but I finally persuaded him to give me an audition. I did not succeed in stirring him to the point of making me an offer for it. Daniel Frohman had successfully produced two plays by Henry C. De Mille (the father of the present motion-picture magnates, William and Cecil), *The Wife* and *The Charity Ball,* plays that bore a close family resemblance and were excellent examples of that sort of society play toward which Mr. Frohman always leaned. We should now perhaps consider them conventional. Vice always triumphed for a period and then Virtue came along and took dominion, and there were always intervals of comic relief, furnished by the comedians, while both Vice and Virtue were in their dressing-rooms.

If any criticism, and that of the friendliest nature, may be warranted in discussing D. F.'s managerial line of thought, it lies in the fact that his close adherence to one style of play rather restricted the muse of his authors. He always seemed to want *The Wife* or *The Charity Ball* all over again. To prove that no irritation, caused by his declining my first comedy, enters into this estimate, I hasten to say that I had several opportunities granted me to do work for him, and it was he who produced my *At the White Horse Tavern* with more than satisfactory results.

Maurice Barrymore, father of the contemporary comedy triumvirate and famous matinée idol of his day

J. M. HILL AT THE UNION SQUARE

DAN FROHMAN has always been conservative, in which respect he was the antithesis of his younger brother, Charles, who not many years later took possession of most of the theatres in New York and by the use of his far-flung advertising line, "Charles Frohman Presents," familiarized that phrase of exploitation.

When A. M. Palmer gave up the Union Square Theatre it was leased by James M. Hill. Robson and Crane were just about to close their brilliant engagement in *The Henrietta,* and I reasoned that Mr. Hill might not be averse to making a production on his own behalf. I was right in that surmise and he granted me an immediate hearing. He not only liked my comedy, but signed an agreement to produce it as the successor to *The Henrietta* before I left his office.

The Union Square Theatre was partly destroyed by fire before my play could be produced. Mr. Hill then made a preliminary production of it in Brooklyn, where its immediate success decided him to secure another New York house for it. He leased the Standard Theatre, known at an earlier time as "The Eagle," and it was here that *A Possible Case* first won the endorsement of a New York public. It ran for a short period at the Standard and was transferred by arrangement with Mr. Palmer to the Madison Square, where it finished its run of several months' duration. Thus, singularly enough, the manager who did not definitely endorse it became its foster father.

FIRST SUCCESS AS A DRAMATIST

MR. HILL gave me a fine cast for my play and equipped it luxuriously. He helped me to win my first signal success as a dramatist, and thenceforth I became established as one of the recognized playmakers.

Mr. Hill had a singularly gentle personality and yet a vigor, commercially speaking, that put him in a class by himself. He looked like a clergyman, but he acted like a merchant prince. With his long side-whiskers and a large capital which he brought into the theatre game from a very successful clothing business in Chicago, he was the first one to advertise himself after the manner of a mercantile man.

He took Denman Thompson when he was an obscure vaudeville performer, who had been playing a rube, "Josh Whitcomb," in a nondescript and not over-refined sketch called *The Female Bathers,* had a play written for him around "Joshua Whitcomb," and made him, through tremendous advertising, one of the most profitable stars in America.

It was not an infrequent thing for Mr. Hill to take a whole page of advertising in the most prominent newspaper of whatever city Denman Thompson was playing in. Invariably the line, "Under the Management of J. M. Hill," appeared in type as large as the name of the star. This extravagant use of the advertising pages for theatrical exploiting was, until Mr. Hill's advent, comparatively unknown. So was the prominent use of the manager's name.

He did the same thing with Margaret Mather, who was his second star. Miss Mather had not been known as an actress before Mr. Hill took hold of her. He had her educated and kept her in seclusion for a year until he was ready to bring her out as a star. He built for her a lavish scenic investiture of *Romeo and Juliet,* and when the time was ripe she burst forth as the Great Margaret Mather, but no greater than J. M. Hill, to whom printers' ink gave equal glory.

This trade device brought in its wake some curious things, with one of which I was personally connected. The success of *A Possible Case* had brought me in friendliest accord with Mr. Hill. He entertained, or seemed to entertain, a flattering opinion of my judgment. This, however, is not an unusual attitude on the part of a manager to whose box-office receipts an author may be temporarily

(*Continued on page* 50)

Kesslere

ESTELLE WINWOOD

This Popular and Ever Fascinating Representative of the Ultra-Modern Woman Will Shortly Be Seen on Broadway in the Leading Rôle of "The Lounge Lizard"

S · C · R · E · E · N · L · A · N · D

The Filming of "Peter Pan." Edna Ferber's "So Big" Screened. "East of Suez." "Classmates"

By AILEEN ST. JOHN-BRENON

PETER PAN'S contemplated journey from the Never Never Land to Los Angeles was the cause of general apprehension among the critics and the public at large.

It was predicted that Sir James Barrie's delicate fantasy of childhood would be converted into a sex drama; that Peter would wake up and find it was a dream; that the Little Lost Boys instead of dropping out of their perambulators would fall off their scooters; that a rum runner and bootleggers would supplant the Pirate Ship and the machinations of Captain Hook's bloodthirsty gang.

But when the gallant Peter jumped over the window-sill into the pretty nursery of the sleeping Darling children, he jumped into the hearts of everyone—into the hearts of all the children in the audience, and that means everyone, for to be with Peter Pan is to be a child again.

A DELIGHTFUL PICTURE

"*PETER PAN*" of the screen is the *Peter Pan* of Sir James Barrie with no deviations whatsoever. There has been no attempt to improve on the author, no compromise with what are known as film conventions. There are no elaborations, no mob scenes, no attempt to magnify the original on "a gigantic scale."

As delicate and fanciful a page in film annals has been devised as those who love Sir James Barrie's magic touch could have hoped for. It has a distinct charm hitherto untouched by the screen.

But *Peter Pan,* because of its very simplicity, evoked a response from even the habitually hard-boiled critics—and during the New York run there was not a dissenting voice from any quarter.

There isn't a false note in the picture. One self-conscious look on the face of a child, one trite scene, or an error of judgment in the casting of an extra and the spectator would be jerked from the Never Never Land of fancy to the Broadway of superficiality. But from every point of view *Peter Pan* is delightful and it is generally agreed that this exquisite fantasy in its new form marks another mile-stone in motion-picture history.

Betty Bronson, the little extra girl from Trenton, New Jersey, chosen above dozens of accomplished actresses, is captivating in the title-rôle and a boyish figure and an elfin face heighten the illusion.

Peter Pan also presents Herbert Brenon in his finest vein. The realm of fantasy since the early days of *Neptune's Daughter* and *Daughter of the Gods,* has always been his forte, and in his latest production for Famous Players, he has not only caught but retained without a single lapse the elusive spirit of the Barrie play. Careful workmanship, and a genuine love and understanding of the play are evidenced in every sequence. Willis Goldbeck, who made the scenario, deserves high praise—the praise which Barrie himself has not hesitated to bestow upon the entire production.

WITH the exception of Ernest Torrence whose rendering of the swaggering chivalry of a fairy-tale pirate is a striking feature, the cast is comprised

Anna Q. Nilsson, always chic and alluring, will soon be seen in *The One Way Street,* directed by John Francis Dillon for First National

mainly of newcomers. Mary Brian, a winsome, womanly Wendy; Esther Ralston, who next to the star has won the greatest admiration, and several little children have found their screen wings almost as miraculously as the Darling children learned they could fly. George Ali as Nana, the dog, and the crocodile are highly amusing, and Cyril Chadwick, Virginia Brown Faire and Phillippe de Lacey are entirely in keeping with the spirit of the picture.

Memorable scenes take place in the cave under the woods, on board the Pirate Ship, and in the Mysterious Forest, and much of that magic which the screen alone can boast of has been ingeniously introduced.

From the very beginning we feared the worst for the film fate of Edna Ferber's novel *So Big,* and with the announcement that Colleen Moore, "the flappers' delight" had been chosen for the idealistic Selina Peake, the editorial pen nib nearly flew off the handle. It was our contention that *So Big,* with the exception of the ride-to-market scene, is not picture material, and that even conceding that point, Colleen Moore was the last person in the film world fitted for the rôle. Curiously enough, the market scene is conspicuous only by its absence in the film transcription, and Colleen Moore, far from being a blot on the celluloid landscape, has risen to the occasion remarkably.

NOVEL COMPLETELY METAMORPHOSED

STILL, Miss Ferber's book has been almost completely metamorphosed in its new form. Save for the early chapters in Selina's life, the issues depicted so feelingly by Miss Ferber have been cast aside quite ruthlessly by the scenario writer in an effort, doubtless, to contribute something original to the "bigger and better pictures" movement. Mere incidents in the book have been developed into tragic happenings of significant import with the consequence that the vital issue, as presented in the photoplay, concerns a mother's struggle through the years for her son only to find a dénouement in her heroic effort to prevent his elopement with a married woman —the familiar vamp. In other words the really important part of the book has been crowded out in order to dwell a bit too long on the scenes, diverting in themselves, of Selina's early youth. The result is an entertaining picture, though one hardly concerned with the direct purposes of Miss Ferber's book—just as we feared.

During the first two reels, however, while Selina, who thought that "cabbages is beautiful," as she danced in the fields with beets (with due apologies to F. Mordaunt Hall) in her hair, we were inclined to cry out "Bravo! We take it all back!" —so faithfully were these rural scenes portrayed; whereupon the scenario writer suffered an immediate change of heart and fulfilled our worst prognostications. Some very fine titles have been interspersed with the final episodes, especially those in which the mother pleads with the vamp for her son. There is a nice tone to the whole picture, and it has a stimulating flavor, even if it is not that of the enterprising author from the West.

When Colleen Moore was romping through the grade B films some seasons past we predicted much for her future. She has those rare gifts for a motion-picture actress, insight, a mobile sensitive face which means more than beauty—though at times she is even beautiful. Miss Moore brings that insight and a wistful quality to *So Big,* and it is evident that she

RAMON NOVARRO AS PRINCE OF THE HOUSE OF HUR

The First Portrait Taken of this Popular Film Star As Ben Hur, the Rôle Which He Recently Created Before the Cameras in Rome

has really studied her rôle. Perhaps she is a trifle too aged toward the end, but at any rate she is convincing, and she lends intelligence and earnestness to her delineation. Colleen Moore is to *So Big* what Norma Talmadge is to *Secrets*. The rôles are similar in their span from girlhood to old age. Henceforth we shall no longer have any doubts as to what Miss Moore should and should not tackle. Given a fair chance she should be capable of mastering any emotional situation.

Charles Brabin directed the picture. He has some faulty bits of direction—to wit, he allows Selina to leave her father's home just after the funeral all bedecked and bedizened with feathers and silks and the like—but his production is on the whole in good taste. Ben Lyons is refreshing as the boy. Gladys Brockwell gives a sincere portrayal of the prematurely aged Maartje Poole, while Dot Farley is a delectable Julia Hempel. John Bowers, Wallace Beery, Rosemary Theby and Phyllis Haver are notable members of a strong cast.

EAST OF SUEZ

WITH all due respect to the talents of Sada Cowan and Raoul Walsh, *East of Suez* is just so much hokum—and the clanging of an Oriental gong every few hundred feet, combined with a symbolical chess-board manipulated by an unctuous Chink does not help to relieve the situation.

The play was never one of Somerset Maugham's best, though it did provide Florence Reed with a highly colorful rôle when presented here some seasons ago. Even the central character has been denatured. The unfortunate Poli Negri has been the victim, with a couple of exceptions, of puny and ineffective film material ever since she made the trip from Berlin to Hollywood. She depicts a half-caste girl whose love affairs go all awry in China. She belongs to the more-to-be-pitied-than-censored ilk, being pursued relentlessly the length of the picture by unwelcome suitors both English and Chinese. Her heart is as pure as gold, but she simply cannot curb that fatal fascination. She is the victim on every side of duplicity and misunderstanding, till the wandering swain in the foreign office finally collects his thoughts and his manhood and determines to marry the girl in the face of public opinion, and take the bally consequences.

Lubitsch guided Miss Negri through the subtleties of *Forbidden Paradise* so expertly that *East of Suez* can be but an anticlimax. Her advisers must learn that Miss Negri has no affiliation with the Pollyanna, kiddy-cart school of acting. Distinctly European in her playing from every point of view, Miss Negri demands the vitality of psychological issues into which to plunge her histrionic fangs.

Edmund Lowe is the leading man for the proceedings. He struggles valiantly. Mrs. Wing Wong is excellent as the native mother who is plugging hard for the Chinese streak in her daughter and for no particular reason save that there has to be someone about to put the poisoned pills in the wine-glasses at regular intervals. Rockliffe Fellowes is seen once again as the villain rampant, a rôle which, no matter how far-fetched, he contrives to make pleasing.

For those who like the Cecil De Mille type of architecture there is Oriental craft into which the witless girl is lured almost to her doom, and the palace of the cunning Chinaman who has designs upon her. In fact all the accouterments of the Orange-Pekoe type of drama are very much in evidence.

The stately Corinne Griffith will essay an Ethel Barrymore characterization when she appears in the screen version of *Déclassée*, Zoe Aikins' erstwhile play

CLASSMATES

SOMEONE out of a job ought to create the business of overseeing the wardrobes of motion-picture actresses. You never know when they will wear decolletée for five-o'clock tea, or appear in a tea-gown for a formal dinner. Special attention should be given to the costumes of ingénues described as débutantes. In *Classmates* little Madge Evans appears in creations that a careful or a knowing eye would never have permitted to mar the scenes of Richard Barthelmess' new picture. It is a pity that no one acted as censor of her coiffure, for the unfortunate Madge, prepossessing enough in herself, is sadly lacking in taste in matters of habiliment, now that she is all grown up and a flapper in her own right.

In his latest production, Barthelmess is the same intelligent, self-contained young actor, transferred to West Point in the principal scene of an amusing story. We found the first part of the picture particularly engaging: the entrance of the raw recruit to America's training school for warriors, his drilling, his trials, his life with his comrades, and his final clash with the unscrupulous young nabob who hates him. There is a stirring bit in which the boy is dismissed dishonorably. But from this point, with the subsequent wanderings in South America, or wherever it is supposed to be, the picture lags perceptibly. Were it not for the buoyancy of Barthelmess and his amiable allies, it would be frankly boring. The picture ends too abruptly.

Barthelmess with the years has developed into a splendid young actor; he has a blending of natural humor and force which make his work engaging, and he has never succumbed to the tendency of the male star, or any star in fact to "hog" the camera, or to assume an attitude. You do not feel that he has one eye on the camera and the other on himself. He has forged his way to the top on merit alone, and he will remain there if the well-known story selecters do not damn him with faint stories.

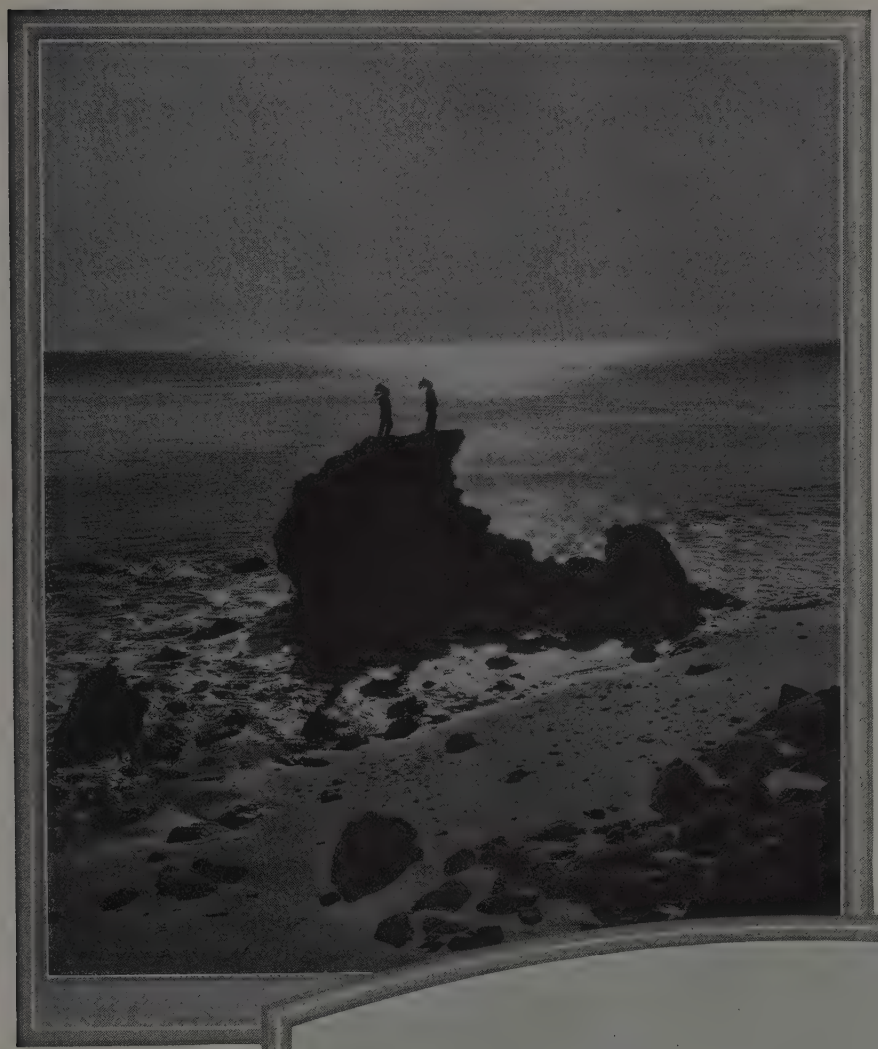
Madge Evans, despite her sartorial shortcomings, is a pleasing little leading woman, and the male support is unusually fine.

INEZ FROM HOLLYWOOD

INEZ FROM HOLLYWOOD is a tale prepared pre-eminently to the taste of Will H. Hayes, guardian extraordinary to the great god morality. It reveals the sweet and self-sacrificing nature of a motion-picture actress, a sinner by reputation, a saint at heart. It shows that you can't believe all those naughty, naughty things you read about movie actresses in the newspapers, and that a normal screen star is in reality in the first stages of beatification. It is tantamount to celluloid heresy to have any faith in the head-lines. It is simply the work of the devil-press-agent, for if you will only take the trouble to look carefully you will find that Hollywood stars carry pegs to hang their halos on. It is this way: a star has got to attract the attention of producers. In order to do that she has to have her name in the papers, and for that she has to have a press-agent, and the press-agent is none too scrupulous in his methods of space grabbing. He wants his pay check and he doesn't care if Diogenes does pass him by. The star, poor dear, is powerless to live down the terrible reputation she gains in her quest for her art.

The clever Adela Rogers St. John wrote this story, and inasmuch as she is an exceptionally able woman, we haven't a doubt that if produced as written, it would have made an entertaining film. But as unrolled at the Strand Theatre it served only to present Anna Q. Nilsson in a rôle quite beneath her. It does, however, provide her with an emotional scene in the final reel.

Mary Astor and Laurence Wheat give able support to the star, and the picture has been adequately directed by Alfred E. Green.



One of nature's own settings, with which no mere scenic artist can compete—the moon shimmering on an unbroken sea, dark rocks and white sands—furnish a scene of great majesty and sweeping beauty in *The Thundering Herd*, a Famous Players offering

This charming setting of a Normandy farmhouse makes an effective frame for the meeting of Olympe *(Betty Compson)* and her Aunt Marie *(Mrs. Seddon)*, chatelaine of the delightful rural home in *New Lives for Old*

NATURE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCREEN

The Camera Uses Eternally Lovely Settings As a Background in Two New Film Productions

M · U · S · I · C

Verdi's "Falstaff" Brings a New American Barytone Into Fame. At Last an Adequate Operatic Ensemble

By GRENVILLE VERNON

AFTER fourteen years, Verdi's *Falstaff* has again been sung at the Metropolitan Opera House. The occasion was memorable on many counts. It was memorable because it was a revival of one of the two or three greatest comic masterpieces of the lyric stage, because it saw once more Antonio Scotti as the Fat Knight, because it witnessed the public's crowning of a new and unknown American artist in a demonstration lasting fifteen minutes, but it was memorable most of all because it showed what the Metropolitan can do when it is on its mettle. Routine is the curse of all artistic institutions, and it is peculiarly the curse of the Metropolitan, which during the season must put on forty and more operas for a maximum of six or eight performances each. Only by a mastery of routine can this be accomplished. Naturally there is little time left for rehearsals. Naturally the individual performances suffer. Naturally there is a wail from opera-lovers that the ensembles are lacking in truth and force, that the tenor steps out of the picture and delivers his heart to the audience instead of to the soprano, that the groupings and movement of the crowds are void of life. It is all, alas! only too true—only let us put the blame where it belongs—not on Mr. Gatti-Casazza, but on the people who make the Metropolitan possible—on the box-holders and the subscribers. Let Mr. Gatti put two *Aïdas,* we will not speak of two *Tristans,* on two Wednesday nights during the season and as soon as the second performance is announced his mail will be heavy with protests. Few subscribers want to hear the same operas twice during the season. If they pay for twenty-three performances, they want to hear twenty-three different operas. If this means that operas must go unrehearsed, well then so be it. To the average opera subscriber variety means more than perfection.

BUT once in a while perfection creeps in. It did at least as far as the spirit and ensemble went in *Falstaff.* In Tullio Serafin the Metropolitan has at last a really first-rate operatic conductor, and in Wilhelm von Wymetal a stage director of the highest order. These two men combined to mould the performance into a unity such as was possessed by no previous opera of the year. The chorus, the minor artists and the stage business received as much attention as the playing of the orchestra and the singing of the principals. And what is more, even the principals were drilled into an understanding of the Shakespearian spirit. Those who remember Mr. Scotti's impersonation of fourteen years ago remember a very capable but rather Italian performance of what ought to be the quintessence of English low comedy. Those who saw it under von Wymetal's direction saw a Fat Knight worthy of the best traditions of the English-speaking stage, a figure compounded of lechery, cowardice and mock dignity, truly "larding the lean earth as he walks along." Mr. Scotti's Falstaff, thanks

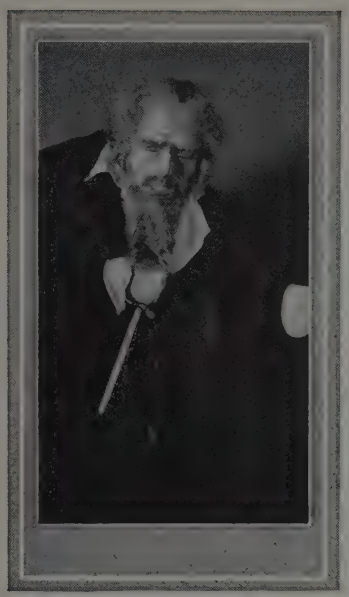
WILHELM FURTWANGLER
Distinguished musician, now in this country as guest conductor with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra

to Mr. Wymetal and perhaps also to Mr. Serafin, is now as perfect a creation as his Scarpia.

ALL the world now knows of the triumph of Lawrence Tibbett as Ford; how the audience, who before that night had scarcely known that he existed, cheered for fifteen minutes until he took a curtain-call alone. Up to that night Mr. Tibbett had been just a young barytone who possessed a lovely voice, but who seemed awkward in action and lacking in either distinction or authority. Yet his Ford was a masterpiece both dramatically and musically. What was the reason for the miracle? Of course had Mr. Tibbett not had it in him there would have been no miracle. You can't make an operatic actor out of a stick of wood, and young Tibbett proved himself in Ford a true acting singer. But had he not had the personal attention of von Wymetal and Serafin, it is impossible to believe that he could have created the perfect figure his Ford became. For the first time he was taught what make-up meant, how to stand, how to walk, how to listen. The result was a splendid lesson in the need of competent training and example. Mr. Tibbett was fortunate. He found his von Wymetal and his Serafin. But how many young American artists may there not be who will never have that opportunity? It does not detract from Mr. Tibbett's attainment, but it shows that opera in America rarely makes that attainment possible. A self-made man may become an oil king, but he won't become a king of tenors or of barytones. For that tradition and study is needed. An oil well is a hole in the ground, but art is the accumulation of the ages.

THE rest of *Falstaff,* all except Mr. Gigli, was admirable. Miss Bori, Miss Telva, Miss Howard, Mr. Didur, Mr. Bada, Mr. Paltrinieri, Mme. Alda, despite her costume, were all quite in the picture and entered into the proceedings with gusto. Mr. Gigli alone insisted on considering a modern Italian tenor superior to an Elizabethan gentleman. Fenton is not a showy part, and this realization seemed to cramp Mr. Gigli's style. Whenever possible he stepped out of the picture and down to the footlights. He was, in short, just another tenor, and in this particular case not an especially good one. The scenery was from the paint-pot of the indefatigable Mr. Urban. It was good enough, though rather German than English. The last act, however, was altogether too brightly lighted, and the moon (won't Mr. Urban just for once give us moonlight without a moon in the back-drop?), was much too much in evidence. It is moonlight, not the moon, which gives mystery. The moon has other uses.

ASIDE from *Falstaff,* the opera has provided during the month little of note. There was a revival of *La Juive,* with Mr. Martinelli in Mr. Caruso's part. It was well staged and on the whole well sung. In *L'Africaine* Mr. Gigli found himself at home and did some exquisite singing, while even more gratifying was the improvement as an artist of Rosa Ponselle in the part of the Indian princess. Miss Ponselle possesses what is probably the most gorgeous woman's voice now to be heard in any country in the world. It is indeed perhaps the only voice whose richness of timbre recalls the great dramatic sopranos of the past. Yet until this season she has too often relied solely on the quality of the voice itself, not realizing that voice uncontrolled by art neither gives the highest pleasure nor can endure. Now Miss Ponselle is apparently determined to allow her brain an equal share with her emotions. It is of happy omen.



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GIOVANNI MARTINELLI

The first artist since Caruso's death to sing Eleazor in *La Juive*

(Circle)

MARY GARDEN

Her Fiora in *L'Amore dei Tre Re* is a creation at once unique and beautiful

© Mishkin

BENIAMINO GIGLI

Whose Enzo in *La Gioconda* is a close second to that of the great Caruso

ANTONIO SCOTTI

True both to Shakespeare and to Verdi, his Falstaff, once seen, is never to be forgotten

ROSA RAISA

An Elizabeth of rare charm and stateliness

LAWRENCE TIBBETT

A practically unknown American barytone, whose Ford in *Falstaff* was cheered for fifteen minutes at the Metropolitan

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A PAGE OF TWO CITIES

Flashes From the New York and Chicago Operatic Screen

V·A·U·D·E·V·I·L·L·E

By RICHARD SAVAGE

Sketches by Maurice Maxeville

NO danger of the Honeymoon Cruise girls getting pneumonia. Nice, sensible young women. They wear woolen tights. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if some day they galloped on to the Palace stage in goloshes. They're Ned Wayburn's pupils and protégées. Maybe he tells 'em to keep the kinks out of their million-dollar legs by swathing them in the fuzzies. As for me, I like 'em in the sheer, gauzy wrappings, croup or no croup. I don't have to pay their doctors' bills. The new act has a lot of dancing dolls aboard a honeymoon yacht. Could you expect a bridegroom to cleave to one woman when he has a whole grab-bag aboard? He doesn't. All I remember of this head-line act is a flash of high kickers using their talents to lure the Benedict from the way he should go. And, at press time, he was fairly on his way to the dogs.

ON the other hand, or, I should say, on the other leg, pneumonia doesn't mean a thing to the Wright Dancers. They call their stunt *A Dance Voyage.* Helen Pachaud gives it a ripping start by splitting her tights amidships with one mighty zip. After that it is just a matter of speedy unraveling. She does an Indian dance. American Indians, apparently, went in heavily for splits. You know what those widespread trick things will do to a torn piece of silk that was once a healthy pair of tights. My dear, you don't know the half of it! Or even the fourth! Helen knows by now how close she was to giving an impersonation of Eve before she found the fig-leaf.

I'D rather watch Charles O'Donnell, of O'Donnell and Blair, fall in and out of a bucket of whitewash than a dozen well-touted head-line acts. *The Plasterers* is certainly a comic classic. It takes real genius to make children chortle with glee and adults shout with mirth during an entire act. O'Donnell accomplishes it with an elaborate arrangement of scaffolds, a carload of bricks and a flock of other building apparatus. His act is as old as Noah, even older, but it's always funny. The marvel is that his neck is still unbroken. This master tumbler certainly plays up to the destructive element in human beings. We all take an unholy delight in seeing the collapse of something, whether it is a building or simply a tall pile of bricks. This comedian gives us all we're looking for and a little bit more. The stage, the team, the property—everything is wrecked when the curtain rings down on his act. And everybody is happy. The act should be a headliner.

JAMES J. CORBETT would earn his salary if he just walked across the stage and gestured a bit. James is not so young, but he looks thirty. And his figure! Most men would eat two dozen yeast cakes a day if that would give them Corbett's magnificent physique. Corbett is the incarnation of vim and vigor. He has a zest for living. He is physically fit and looks it. This is not a physical-culture harangue. Simply handing it to Jim for keeping in such trim that it is a pleasure and an inspiration to feast one's eyes on that magnificent frame of his. With Jack Norton he puts on a little thing called *Taking the Air.* The act's not much. But Corbett's so easy to look at that nothing else matters.

VICTOR Moore-Emma Littlefield and Company call their stunt *Change Your Act or Back to the Woods.* Tempting the devil. They better take care. Which is almost enuf said. They give a presentation of a ham vaudeville act. It's terrible! What's the difference between a genuinely terrible vaudeville act and a make-believe terrible one? There isn't any. Jim Jazzboo and Em Hookum of the sketch are about as dreadful as any performers ever dragged off a stage with a cruel little hook. If, in their reincarnation as Victor Moore and Emma Littlefield they gave something worth while, for contrast, all would be well. But they don't. They do their awful stuff and bow and depart. Collect their salaries and leave a vaudeville audience the remembrance of something dreadful enough to keep it up all night. The cheesiest rarebit, messed up with ten yards of rubbery strings, could never bring a worse nightmare in its wake than this back-to-the-woods material which this team flaunts.

COMES Robert Benchley, critic of *Life,* to the two-a-day, with his *Treasurer's Report,* already made familiar in last season's *Music Box Revue.* As humor it's away over the heads of vaudeville fans. Satire to them is just something you find in the dictionary if you look through the S-A-T's long enough. They can't see anything very funny in one of those long-drawn out, dry, statistical speeches that treasurers of almost every organization under the sun, particularly philanthropic outfits, deliver on the slightest provocation. Benchley is funny, but his stuff is too deep for vaudeville.

NONETTE, billed as the singing violiniste, does such terrible things with her mouth during her entire act that it is painful to watch her. Her tongue works like a live lizard, darting in and out of her mouth and caressing the entire area of her lips as she wields the bow. It is a distressing mannerism. She probably doesn't know she possesses it. But she should. For it is the real reason why her playing meets with such little response. Every one seated near me, within hearing radius, criticized this horrid trick of hers. She is a violinist with pep and personality. Once she overcomes this habit, she will notice a marked change in the attitude of her audiences.

THERE is something suave and pleasing about Albert Whelan, an Australian, whose billing boasts that he originates all he does on the stage. After the biff-bang-zowie clang and clatter of other acts, his quiet assurance is restful. He has a nice stage presence, and though his imitations, aided and abetted by trick contrivances offstage, are not particularly thrilling, he brings a manner and a bearing to the vaudeville stage which is a relief after the wise-cracking boys who are so sure of themselves that they remind a lethargic audience that they will expect a good hand after their act. He wears a topper as a topper should be worn, and the very act of picking it up off the piano becomes a momentous gesture as Whelan performs it. High-brow? Perhaps. But you know as well as I do that a little of that kind of stuff won't hurt the vaudeville stage a bit. Nix. Never.

DRAMATIC playlets, with legitimate stage stars in the cast, are like little stepchildren in the two-a-day. Outsiders. They don't belong. They appear to be sort of fillers-in until the regulars, the wise-cracking, shake-your-shimmy, hot-mammy,

(*Continued on page* 56)

Campbell

ROBERT EMMET KEANE

Who, with his charming wife, Claire Whitney, is head-lining domestic comedy in the halls, with occasional excursions into the legitimate

Muray

THE LORRAINE SISTERS

Light as thistledown are these two singing dancers, who flash through a varied and entertaining vaudeville offering

SPADORA

Sunny Italy is interpreted through songs and dances offered by this versatile and smiling Italian head-liner who hails from Rome

Strauss-Peyton

SYLVIA CLARK

This lass of laughter is a singing droll of the two-a-day who has won popularity with her tricky clowning

NEIL McKAY

This Scotch humorist has a supply of rare stories and songs, which he brings all the way from bonny Caledonia

PHYLLIS FAIR

A spirituelle dancer of the classical and interpretative school, whose dancing enriches the act of Keystone Kameos

VARIOUS REASONS FOR VARIETY

A Colorful Parade of the Interesting Exponents of Nimble Wit and Nimbler Toes

Dinah does her utmost to avoid being compromised, but Tony insists on introducing her to the ship's doctor as his wife. *Left to right:* Bernard Reinold, Sidney Blackmer, Helen Hayes, Beryl Mercer

The silent passenger (*Percy Ames*) has nothing to say, but his actions are eloquent and amusing

During quarantine, marooned on the island, Tony becomes more enamoured every day of his pseudo wife. *Left to right:* Olga Olonova, Mr. Blackmer, Miss Hayes, Edward Eliscu

Dinah, bothered by fussy fellow-passengers, who believe her a bride on her honeymoon, takes refuge in bed

Photos White

Quarantine lifted, Dinah is free to go home, but after thinking it over, she finds she would rather stay with Tony

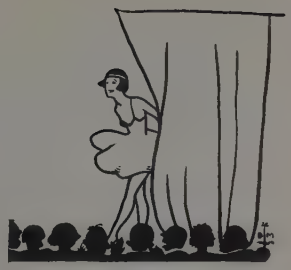
"QUARANTINE" AT THE HENRY MILLER THEATRE

A Fresh and Engaging Comedy, With a Humorous Sex Complex

Heard on Broadway

News and Gossip Straight from the Inside of Theatredom

By L'Homme Qui Sait



THESE are hard days for box-office buyers of theatre tickets. With the hit shows all in the hands of the speculators, certain of the houses with mediocre attractions have raised the box-office price to get the benefit of the additional cut-rate income, which is at least half of the box-office cost. Much comment has been passed up and down Broadway on the manifest unfairness of such a practice.

DAVID BELASCO'S next will be a vehicle for DAVID WARFIELD, *Alias Santa Claus*. WILLARD MACK, the author, withdrew from the cast of *The Dove* in order to be in the new Warfield show. *Alias Santa Claus* makes the second Mack script to be produced by Mr. Belasco this season.

Rose-Marie during New Year's week broke all Broadway box-office records by grossing over $52,500 at a $5 top with one night, New Year's, scaled at $11. *Rose-Marie* and *The Student Prince* are regularly turning in $45,000 weeks to their producers, but *The Love Song,* third of the magnificent operetta trio, was in the cut rates two days after opening.

Matinée revivals of two Barrie plays, *The Old Woman Shows Her Medals* and *Half Hours,* were in prospect recently and may even yet be an actuality. A producer with several ideal Barrie people in his cast has the idea in mind.

DEEMS TAYLOR, who is the *World's* music critic, is now making a grand opera of the *Janice Meredith* story, for which he wrote a highly praised score when the picture was in New York last year. Taylor has been working on the grand opera for many weeks and is said to have been assured of a production upon its completion.

MME. EMMA CALVE, the famous prima donna, will open in vaudeville some time next month, booked on the Keith circuit. Already this year MME. JOHANNA GADSKI and MME. EMMA TRENTINI have played the Keith time, but Mme. Gadski, for all her Wagnerian prowess and what-not, was an acknowledged flop, and many houses avoided booking her. ELEANORA DE CISNEROS was another famous one to try vaudeville, but Eleanora was confined to the one-week tryout stages, and that made her exit more easy.

RITA JOLIVET'S return to the speaking stage is being made in *Moon Magic,* currently playing out of town but due to break out in New York within a week or so. It was to Miss Jolivet that CHARLES FROHMAN, facing death as the *Lusitania* was sinking, said: "Why fear death? It is the most beautiful adventure in life."

Peter Pan's revival in New York was anything short of a sensation. Business never did reach capacity any one week, and on the Christmas matinée, of all days, there were at least four empty rows down-stairs. The revival was taken off early this month and is currently touring. Another one of the year's big productions to flop is *Annie Dear,* the BILLIE BURKE vehicle, which, despite its cast and production, never attained leadership among the expensive musicals. But *Mme. Pompadour* was the prize flop of them all. What that show lost would buy shoes for the Bulgarian Army.

ERLANGER and ZIEGFELD have patched up their differences. Where they were angry early in January over certain business matters, the last of the month found them patched up and enjoying a resumption of amicable relations.

The proposed operettas for the year are still coming. ELSA ERSI, the Hungarian prima donna, is to be starred in one which the SHUBERTS are concocting, while *The Dutch Girl* is probably by this time ensconced in some New York theatre. And, best of all, the Gilbert and Sullivan operas are to be back in town, with DE WOLF HOPPER and his troupe presenting a large repertoire.

Variety's last box-office score of the various critics' averages revealed that ALAN DALE, dean of them all, was right on the bottom and that HEYWOOD BROUN, one of the newer generation of critics, was firmly established on top. *The Graphic,* with its public-opinion criticisms, was shoved out of last place by Dale, but they hung on the next to last spot without having any close competitors.

This story about Broun's going to the theatre in high hat and togs is matched only by the stunt ALEX WOOLLCOTT, of the *Evening Sun,* has been pulling during the wintry nights. Alex, chubby and inclined to rotundity, has been wearing himself a pair of galoshes and, flapper-like, refuses to buckle them. The swish-swish effect of Alex and the galoshes walking down the same aisle has gotten more laughs than some of the shows he has criticized.

The Miracle will in all probability be taken to Chicago shortly and played there in the Auditorium Theatre, if present plans remain. Following that, it is planned to produce a road-show version of the famous religious spectacle and cash in on some of the national publicity which it received. The recent Cleveland engagement was successful financially, netting a profit to the guarantors, who put up $200,000 that MORRIS GEST might bring his pride and joy to that town.

Antonia will probably be the first Frohman production of next season, while *The Green Hat* will be the AL WOODS special for the fall. In this KATHARINE CORNELL will star, while in *Antonia* nobody has been selected for the lead rôle.

WALTER HAMPDEN'S *Othello* production wasn't nearly so successful as the revival of *Cyrano de Bergerac.* Granted that the expenses entailed were not nearly so great, the response was in no way gratifying.

Theatregoers throughout America are going to miss much free entertainment in the future, for the Actors' Equity Association has ruled that plays and musical comedies must not be broadcast unless the actors are paid a pro rata share of the week's salary. It was at one time the custom to radio shows out in the provinces, using the etherized words and music as a "come-on" to ticket buyers.

EDNA MAY OLIVER, long a portrayer of slavey comedy rôles on the American stage and generally recognized as one of its fine actresses, gets her starring chance soon, when GEORGE C. TYLER produces the Ma Pettingill stories of HARRY LEON WILSON.

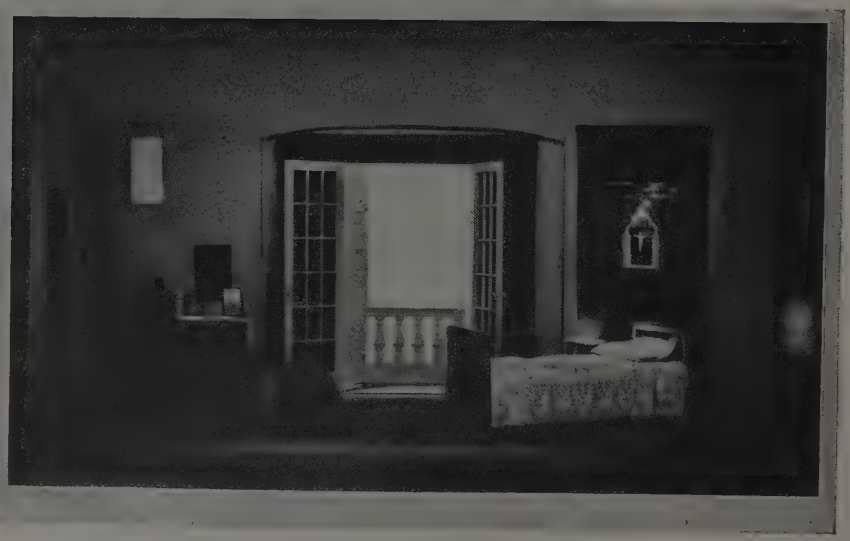
Some time ago L. LAWRENCE WEBER, the producer, would have none of the *Milgrim's Progress* script, saying that he didn't want to produce it. Then Hill-Strauss, Inc., took it up and put LOUIS MANN in the lead. And following a few weeks at Wallack's, it landed right back in Mr. Weber's theatre, the Longacre.

The first number of *The Quill,* the official organ of the T. P. R. O. A. (Theatrical Press Representatives of America), has made its appearance on the news-stands, and a lively, up-to-date little sheet it is! Its avowed object and policy is to "uphold the standard of the press representatives and thus keep in close contact that valuable and co-operative spirit that has existed between press and producer." It is illustrated with cartoons of the critics and contains much matter of interest, both to newspaper men and the general public. Long may it wave!

THE AMATEUR STAGE

Edited By M. E. KEHOE

A Group of Effective Settings by the Cornell Dramatic Club of Cornell University



These settings for Shaw's *Arms and the Man* and Alice Gerstenberg's *Overtones* gain in interest when it is considered that the stage of Cornell Dramatic Club is but twenty-four by twelve in size

The skeleton setting for *Arms and the Man* (upper and lower illustrations) was designed by Prof. A. M. Drummond, Director of the Club. The setting for *Overtones* is shown in the center

Photo by Wiebmer

Medieval setting for the third act of *The Road to Yesterday*, executed at the Mechanic Arts High School, St. Paul. This setting was later repainted and revamped for the production of *Dulcy*, shown on the following page

Amateur Stagecraft Bordering on the Professional

In a High School Where All the Arts Are Co-ordinated

By RALPH E. SMALLEY

THE high school is really a wonderful place for work in stagecraft. In the first place, in its human aspects it is an inspiration to work there, because what youth may lack in skill it makes up in spirit and fresh enthusiasm. From a more material standpoint, while its scope may be more limited than that of the commercial theatre, its clientele is practically always assured and it has a more compact and workable organization behind it than has the college stage.

The combination is particularly happy in a technical high school where, besides cultural background, there is the constructive element of the shops and laboratories. Stagecraft, concerned as it is in depicting the visual elements of life in general, embraces elements taught in all the various departments of the high school. Therein lies much of its educational value.

THE problems of the stage craftsman blessed with a high-school stage where fair equipment is provided fortunately increase with the increased facilities. I say "fortunately" because it is the problems, of course, and not the facilities which make the work interesting. Compensating that, however, is the greater increase in the worth of the result.

If we are among the fortunate ones who have a place to hang our drops and a light or two of controllable intensity, we have the fascination of planning the use of our stage equipment to the best artistic and educational advantage.

This is the last of a series of six articles, devoted to High School Play Production, published in The Amateur Stage Department, beginning with the October issue. If you have missed any of these numbers, they are available at the regular magazine rate. Address The Amateur Editor, THEATRE MAGAZINE

The use of stage equipment calls for organization, which should follow along the general lines found in practice professionally. Any organization should allow for a high factor of fallibility in human nature, and a high-school organization is no exception. A superfluous title or two, on the stage force, is not amiss if the holder thereof is inspired to more responsibility and greater work. Recognition of length of service in the shape of service stripes for members of the stage force also has its effect.

THE ramifications of the organization operating the stage equipment should extend throughout the school, affecting, as it does, all departments from service to executive and from student to faculty. The educational value of the stage-work lies, of course, in the correctness of the information given the pupil, and the proper method of laying out a stair string, for instance, should not be expected from the art teacher, or a dissertation as to the relative value of different hues under varying lights be expected from the manual training teacher. Yet both are pertinent to stagecraft.

However, the aforesaid factor of fallibility pertains to the faculty as well as to students, and a workable organization is more often the result of attuned personalities than of technical capacities; perhaps more so than in the case of the pupils, youth being more flexible in its relationships.

Besides the teacher of expression or of music in charge of the particular production, a faculty stage director, a wardrobe mistress, a committee on make-up and one on green-room control are advisable in addition to the customary faculty business manager.

THE student organization varies somewhat in its requirements, fifteen to twenty boys being a good average number where construction work is attempted. A greater number tends to crowd the ordinary stage during performances. The

Photo by Wiebmer

Under the direction of Ralph E. Smalley, the students of Mechanic Arts High School, St. Paul, evolved this setting for *Dulcy*, from the production of *The Road to Yesterday*, shown on the preceding page

Mechanic Arts High School of St. Paul stage force consists of about eighteen members, divided into three groups. The stage manager and assistant are over all three groups. The property-man is in charge of one section, handling furniture and other properties. The stage carpenter heads another section, taking care of the setting and striking of scenery, and the chief electrician controls the electricians. In addition, when talent affords, a property-master superintends the making of furniture and other properties.

Coveralls, stencilled with the names of the owners, and caps are worn by the members of the force, the caps being in school colors, with letters signifying the position on the force, such as "M." for stage manager, "A. P." for assistant property-man, etc. "S." for stage appears on all caps. A service stripe is given for each semester's work, for which a half credit is also allowed, only two of which, however, count toward graduation.

The order of rank and promotion is posted on the bulletin-board in the shape of an organization and promotion chart. A big circle at the top stands for the stage manager, below it a slightly smaller one for the assistant stage manager, connected to it by a line. Connected to this circle below, on the same level, are three for the property-man, stage carpenter and chief electrician; below them three for the assistants and lower still those for each group of property-men, grips and electricians. The stage manager is Grade I; assistant, Grade II; property-man, stage carpenter and chief electrician, Grade III; assistants, Grade IV, and the rank and file, Grade V. Promotion from Grades V, IV and III is based upon ability, dependability and length of service. Promotion from Grades III and II requires in addition executive ability. The duties of each officer and group are typed upon the same sheet as the chart. At the end of the semester an examination is given chiefly upon technical terms in connection with stagecraft.

WITH this organization the settings, furniture and properties for the school plays and operettas are executed from blue-prints of uniform three-inch by five-inch size, which are subsequently filed for future reference. These, of course, are supplemented by full-size details where required. A "job sheet" posted on a rack for holding the cardboard mounted blue-prints records the assignments of the various projects and checks up on the progress made.

With equipment and an organized stage force, the high-school producer is confronted with the problems of lighting and setting. Manifestly a simplification of professional methods is both necessary and desirable. A short story may form an English assignment, but never a novel, or a chair a manual-training project, but not an entire suite. Yet each contains the basic principles required, and so with the high-school stage settings. A few drapes, well arranged and properly lit, are infinitely more beautiful than elaborately built walls with painted shadows and importunate texture. An interpretation of the mood of the play involves imagination and thought where attempts to carry out the author's stage directions means merely the overcoming of mechanical obstacles. Where definite periods or styles are called for, however, care should be taken to express the spirit of that period which has its educational value in that it necessitates research work. All the work here illustrated was preceded by very interesting research.

A "close-up" of the *Dulcy* setting (*above*), showing the home-made lighting units. The unit on the floor, which is the same as the two units overhead, is used as a trench light outside the window in the scene

---

SUPPOSE that we are informed that a production of *Pinafore* is imminent and that we are to produce a ship of the line forthwith. We begin our research and discover that precedent calls for much nautical junk. Pictures of ships of the period yield greater encouragement, though, being devoid of much of the enthusiastic imagination of the Victorian scene designer. Orchardson's painting of Napoleon on board the *Bellerophon* shows a simple and feasible rail treatment. Being limited in funds in the same breath that we are commanded to produce a ship, we decide a maximum of rail and a minimum of deck-house to be advisable. So we spread the rail

(*Continued on page* 66)

Fashion

LYNN FONTANNE, WHOSE PRESENTATION OF "AN ACTRESS" IN *THE GUARDSMAN* IS ONE OF THE MOST ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE NEW YORK THEATRICAL SEASON, HAS ACQUIRED A DECIDED FLAIR FOR WEARING SMART COSTUMES

Pach

Miss Fontanne charms the discriminating woman in this unusual evening gown of flesh-colored chiffon. Crystals are embroidered and applied to achieve a bodice effect over the shoulders and hips, procuring a very slim silhouette. Designed by Bergdorf-Goodman

Pach

A distinguished frock of black chiffon with two gathered panels at the front, edged with natural coque feathers. Narrow panels of chiffon add to the grace of the gown, which is finished with an amusing collar of coque, with long streamers of the chiffon. Imported by Bergdorf-Goodman

MARGUERITE NAMARA AND HER PARIS COSTUMES

Pach

Marguerite Namara, known as the "California Nightingale," has returned to America, after singing two years at the Paris Opéra-Comique, where she outrivaled the old memories of Sibyl Sanderson. One cannot think of the talented Marguerite without visualizing an extremely chic figure, whose wardrobe is always the last word in smart fashion

A trailing gown of red velvet, with long sleeves and a bertha of cream Spanish lace, worn by Mme. Namara to the opera, the first night of her return to New York. The lace scarf headdress introduces a new note for evening. To the left, Namara shows a Lucile evening wrap of gold cloth, edged with tiny folds of petunia-colored velvet

Specially posed photographs on both pages by Pach Studio

A Moyneux wrap of banana-colored suded cloth, worn to the races by Mme. Namara. Natural lynx borders the coat and wide sleeves to match the collar. A yellow felt hat carries at the side a pom-pom of light monkey fur

A Lucile house-gown, made in two pieces, may be copied successfully by a clever dressmaker. Of shell-pink crêpe, the sleeveless foundation slip is finely pleated with wide insertions of Margot lace. Over this is swung a three-panel drapery, forming deep lace epaulets over the shoulder. A wonderful necklace of crystals is worn with the gown

With this smart afternoon frock of cream Margot lace is worn one of the new jeweled belts which is affected by the fashionable world in Paris. Jeweled in jade and ivory, this fascinating accessory matches the handle of the long stick used frequently by this American singer. Baroque pearls, worn with this costume, are much approved by Paris

FASHIONS FOR SPRING INTRODUCED BY THE ACTRESS

(*In oval*) Alice Joyce, lovely lady of screen fame, renews one's desire for the larger hat. Made of black lace, glycerined feathers droop gracefully from the crown over the short back. From Bruck-Weiss

Muray

Doris Keane, whose new play, *Starlight*, is charmingly significant as to name, sponsors the high hat for spring. Grey astrakhan is used with taupe satin to achieve a Russian effect. Designed by Henri Bendel

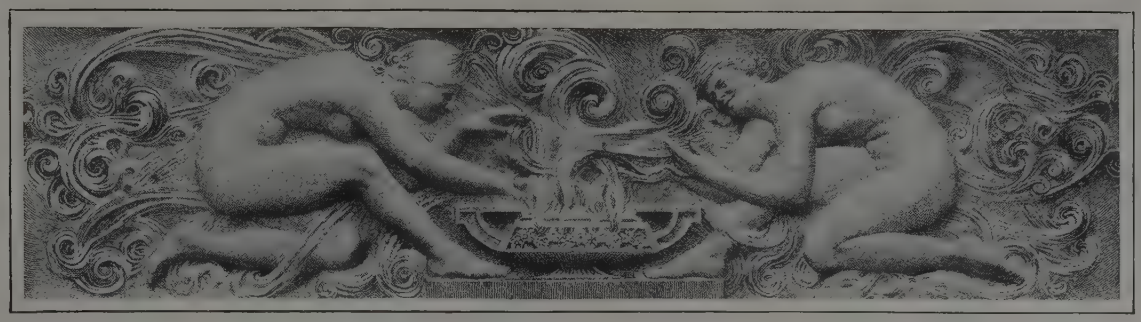
Muray

May Allison, popular screen star, presents one of the new coats for spring. Made of white kasha, fur is used sparingly, but in smart manner of narrow bands of gazelle fur. Designed by H. Jaeckel & Sons

Goldberg

Alice Laidley, in private life Mrs. John Harriman, who makes her début in *The Small Timers* at the Art Theatre, is lovely in a white taffeta frock with side drapery and hem edged in tulle. From Bonwit-Teller

Muray



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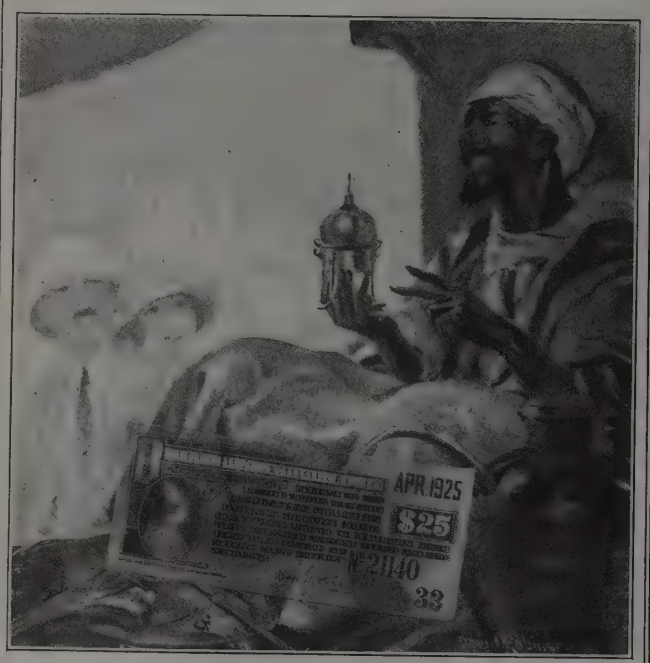

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CALL FOR REHEARSAL—11 A.M.

(*Continued from page* 10)

The word "psychology" is always good. "The psychology of this character is that he was brought up by his sister, not by his mother. Do you understand?"

"Er . . . quite so."

And there follows a dissertation of a rather involved sort, which is not made clearer by the racket from the adjacent rooms. "You see, this sister dominated him from the time . . ."

"Once more now!" yells the voice of a dance coach. "We've gone through this seventeen times and every time one of you girls has started with the left foot. Now! Dum te dum dum. Break, break, buck-break. That's the stuff. Now you've got it. No! Wrong again!"

So much for psychology.

Belasco, who concentrates on a few plays a year, avoids the harrowments of hired halls. He rehearses luxuriously, in the grand manner. First he calls his company together and, sitting in a comfortable room, he reads the entire play aloud, giving them his conception of it; so that every member of the cast will get the right idea of the piece as a whole and see the true relation to it of the rôle he is to play. This system is in direct contrast to that of one of the "modern" producers, who lets his players study their parts in advance, each following his own bent. When they come together to rehearse, this producer allows them to do as they list, he stepping in as umpire only in cases of absolute conflict. He would never be so blunt as to call out as did a certain director: "Hey, remember you're supposed to be a king, not a brewer."

THE PUPPET MASTER

BELASCO is very much the king. His actors step into rôles he has mentally created for them. They rehearse for weeks amid the elegance of a complete stage set and with all "props." There is no need to imagine the atmosphere of the play; it is all there from the beginning—for them to work in and "live" their parts. A costly system, yet by it the keen Puppet Master gets his results; and since ingenious realism is his fun in life, why shouldn't he treat himself to it regardless of expense?

There is a story current of how once when not even the sumptuousness of the trappings had been enough to imbue a sluggish cast with the spirit of the play, Belasco, to electrify them, suddenly dashed his watch upon the floor of the stage so that it broke into smithereens. The actors were startled indeed. Contritely they bucked up and began acting with real fire—not guessing that the watch, which had been sacrificed to rouse them, was a "prop" one made of brass. This story may be apocryphal, but it is typical of the way in which the wizard of Forty-fourth Street plays at creating wonders in his elaborately equipped workshop.

FOUR YEARS' START

ORDINARY rehearsals, as the average actor knows them, have little of the august or picturesque. In Bryant Hall, the most teeming incubator of entertainment in New York, one finds nothing to suggest glamour. Just eight bleak, bare rooms with people in them shouting, singing, dancing, conferring or simply waiting. And waiting is the worst job of all. "You haven't seen Mr. So-and-So hereabouts, have you?" inquires an elegantly groomed individual who has been restlessly crossing and recrossing his long legs. "He sent word he'd be here after lunch." It is then nearly five o'clock. A huge mountain of a woman, who sits fanning herself as she listlessly watches a derby-hatted director bossing a cast, confides: "They told me they might need a fat type. I've been sitting here two days now. I guess I'll stick it out two days more, and then if they don't engage me I'll go."

Down-stairs a bulletin board announces what is going on: In the ballroom a meeting of the striking ladies' garment-makers, in the smaller rooms rehearsals of the chorus of a Ziegfeld road company, of a cabaret act, of a grand opera ballet and of various plays and sketches. And at the office opposite is an ominous sign stating that all rooms must be paid for in advance. This stipulation has brought more than one dramatic venture to an unhappy ending. Not infrequently an actor who has been rehearsing four or five days in a small vaudeville playlet is informed that there will be no rehearsal to-day for him; his "producer" hasn't been able to produce the necessary $2.50 for the room.

The tribulations of getting a start on Broadway are humorously summarized in the legend of the juvenile who boasted that he had "been an actor five years—four and a half of them in Bryant Hall." Yet from these halls emerge the most glittering hits and in them the most enviable careers have their beginning.

A Credit

The portraits of Nana Bryan, Bertha Kalich and Elsie Ferguson in the January issue of THEATRE MAGAZINE were by Maurice Goldberg, the well-known artist-photographer.

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No. France isn't brick and stone. It's alive—human. France is French people, living—laughing—shaping inanimate things to the French pattern—such a neat little pattern, with a rose or two on top! Balzac was born in Tours, and he could have made France anywhere.

That's why French Line boats are France afloat. When you walk up the gangplank, you're in France. The furnishings of the staterooms are French—the speed and detail of the service, the charm of the little shops, the cunning of the hairdresser, the verve and gayety of the dances, the marvel of the things on which you dine!

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CONFESSIONS OF A PLAYWRIGHT

(*Continued from page* 28)

contributing. This attitude, however, like the train schedule, is liable to change without notice.

It was at this auspicious stage that my friend, Matt Morgan, comes back into the story.

After having lifted the Strobridge Lithograph Company of Cincinnati into the greatest prominence as purveyors of pictorial work for the theatre, he returned to New York at the head of his own studio, where he not only did exceptional work as a scenic artist, but painted cycloramas and panoramas. In figure painting he was unexcelled.

Our friendship, after the lapse of years, was soon renewed. He had just completed a masterful series of paintings in the form of a panorama depicting the entrance of the Saviour into Jerusalem. It was his idea that this work might be profitably displayed in the halls throughout the country. He asked me to enlist Mr. Hill's interest in the enterprise. This I did, and successfully. A meeting was arranged between the two men and a contract was soon drawn up. Mr. Hill took the panorama out West, and a nominal price of admission, which appealed to the masses, made the venture in Chicago very popular. But Mr. Hill was not going to lose this opportunity for self-advertisement. He billed the attraction as "Christ Entering Jerusalem, Under the Management of J. M. Hill."

I had at this time two works of mine running concurrently in New York, *The Lady or the Tiger* at Palmer's and *A Possible Case* at the Madison Square Theatre. Success comes in waves, even more so in the theatre world than in any other; and this momentary prominence secured for me considerable work from other managers.

NEGOTIATIONS FOR *THE SENATOR*

MR. JOSEPH BROOKS, a well-known figure in the profession, saw A *Possible Case.* It was an ingeniously constructed play. To tell its story narratively would convey an idea that it was exceedingly intricate. Whatever improbabilities might have seemed patent in the telling assumed a certain plausibility through making the separate scenes (that were devised to lead up to a climax) seem in themselves grantable and therefore possible. This is a technical point necessary for all playwrights to grasp.

Mr. Brooks wanted me to rewrite a certain play for the comedian he was then managing, Mr. William H. Crane. I had done a great deal of rewriting and reconstructing of plays. Mr. James L. Ford, the well-known literary free-lance and *raconteur,* dubbed me Doctor Sydney in print and published humorous, but not necessarily irritating, articles about my surgery.

Joe Brooks (everybody called him Joe) had read what Ford had written and told me he wanted to put me to the test. His star, Crane, had only just split with Robson and naturally was much concerned about the material for his coming season, single-handed. He had banked on a certain play, *The Senator,* which had been especially written for him, but in the form in which it was delivered was considered insufficient.

GEORGIE DREW BARRYMORE

AS this play, with which my name became subsequently associated, meant more to me financially than any other, I shall give it its proper space, but as it served, besides giving a great opportunity to Crane, to bring into prominence an actress who, in technical parlance, "ran away with the piece," and as this actress had played in *A Possible Case,* I shall devote the close of this chapter to the congenial task of describing Georgie Drew Barrymore, sister of John Drew and wife of Maurice Barrymore.

Primarily, though she was still a young woman, she was the mother of three gifted children, Ethel, Lionel and John. What Ethel Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore and John Barrymore mean to the present generation is too well understood to need further comment. Georgie (that is the affectionate way in which all the profession referred to her) was one of God's merriest gifts to the world. He must have created her in a holiday mood. She was the daughter of the great Mrs. Drew, whose Mrs. Malaprop in *The Rivals* glorified the cast that surrounded Joseph Jefferson in his latter days. Unlike her mother, Georgie lacked all severity. She has often been referred to as a comedian in petticoats, and this drollery characterized her equally in private life and before the footlights. In fact, those who knew her intimately in the former environment, which was a privilege I enjoyed through her performances in my plays, had opportunities for some very unconventional enjoyment—for Georgie was so unconventional as to be startling. Her standing as an exemplary wife and mother was so well established that she could afford to indulge her exuberant spirits in as many preposterous and daring methods of speech as she chose. What from other lips and in less innocently spontaneous natures might have occasioned comment, or even shocked Puritan ears, escaped from hers with all the artless naughtiness of a precocious child. When, for instance, one day at dinner in my country home she was asked by a prim old lady whether a certain woman under discussion was a blonde or a brunette, she had no hesitation in touching her own hair and saying, "Oh, about two washes lighter than mine." And the prim old lady looked at us all in baffled wonder.

(*To be continued*)

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Powder, Rouge and
Lipstick
Price, $1.75
Powder Refill, 50c
with puff
Three-in-one Refill
$1.00, with two puffs

New
Glove Rouge Vanity
Orange, Medium, Dark
Price, 50c

Changeable Lipstick
Suits any Complexion
Price, 50c

Hexagon
Eyebrow Pencil
Brown and Black
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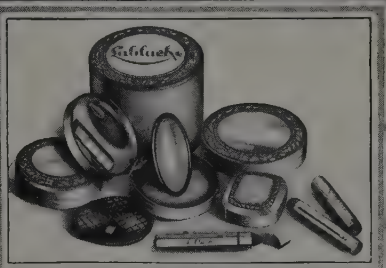

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LABLACHE

THE CHOICE OF GENTLEWOMEN FOR THREE GENERATIONS

THE GUARDSMAN AND HIS WIFE

(*Continued from page* 23)

"That is one of the finest things about my wife," he said. "She is reasonable. I couldn't have married a fool."

"What if professional differences should arise?"

"We would talk them out. Reasonable people can do that and reach a conclusion. In *The Guardsman* we talked for four days before a point about the way a part should be played was settled. If I had been playing with another man than my husband, I would have waived the point for peace's sake, which isn't well for a play."

"Then you think an actress should marry an actor?"

"Indeed, yes. Why not?" The two, though unrehearsed, spoke in unison of tone and sentiment.

I told them of the late and several-times married John Mason's conclusion that players should not wed because they were "only summer spouses anyway."

"But we won't be," rumbled the guardsman.

"Not if we can help it," amended Miss Fontanne.

"If inequalities of opportunity arise?"

"I am quite willing that my husband should have a better part next year and the next," said the guardsman's wife.

"My wife couldn't have a bad part." Mr. Lunt placed his cup on the table with an emphasis that made its china neighbors shiver. "Because whatever part it was, she would build it and vitalize it until it at least seemed a good part. She would make a good part of it."

"Bill!"

"You would, my dear. You have." They were unshakably sure that no professional jealousy could ever mar the mirror smoothness of their lives together.

"I could never have loved Bill if he had been a bad actor. I could not have respected him. So I would never have married him." Miss Fontanne spoke with conviction.

"And I would not have fallen in love with Lynn if she hadn't been a fine actress," echoed her husband.

"You wouldn't have fallen downstairs at her feet if she hadn't played the reluctant, red-nosed bride so well?"

"No. The gray cloak and hat and the big eyes between would have had their influence, but they couldn't have toppled me quite over and down. I admired her brain before her person. Her art before her eyes. I don't know how a man can fall in love with a pretty fool. A fool is particularly repugnant to me."

The case for players' marriage with players was gaining strength.

"I should be sorry to be the wife of a broker or any business man," said the woman advocate. "For even though life should become dull and humdrum to people of the stage by day, in the evening they go to the theatre and both enter a different world and live in it for three hours, the world of romance. They have an escape from the occasional gray days of life that is barred to an average couple."

"Is it, as managers say, 'good business' for a husband to make love to his wife in a play? Once managers wouldn't permit a husband and wife to play together because they said it destroyed the illusion. They said the public didn't like it, and because the public didn't like it they wouldn't have it."

"I think it is a question of stage art. If the scene is well played, the audience doesn't know, or if it knows, doesn't care that the players have solved their own troubles and are husband and wife." So Miss Fontanne, and so with his boyish ned Mr. Lunt.

It was his wife's eye that held now the youthful sparkle. "Of course, it is trying to be married to a temperamental actor. The one you see there is a raving madman while he is studying a part. I would like to lock him in a room by himself and toss the key into the street until his studying mania has passed."

"But she wouldn't be so inhuman. She knows that in the last stages I have to walk the streets until the part has taken final form. When I can keep the character with me in the crowded streets, I know I have him. Then I can come home and be sane again. But there's something else that is trying in our *ménage*. It is the calmness with which my wife goes through the ordeal that makes a ninety-nine-percent. maniac of me. Her utter calmness makes me frantic."

I have heard that Mrs. Lunt is an exceedingly domestic woman. While she was playing on the stage and her bridegroom had to rise at six to prepare for his departure to a motion-picture studio, she took the place of the rebellious cook, who "couldn't think of comin' to cook before eight. No, suh." She cooked and served a substantial breakfast, kissed her mate good-by, waved to him from the window and went back to bed for the other three hours of sleep she needed. Greater devotion hath no actress wife who retires at two.

"We shouldn't say it is perfect. For though it has been so far in seven years, we may hate each other," was Mrs. Lunt's placid warning.

"We won't, Lynn," said her husband.

His arm was about her shoulders as they watched me down the stone stairs at the Lexington Avenue apartment house, where Sidney Howard, the author of *They Knew What They Wanted,* lived with his bride, Clare Eames. Another pair that is happy, though of the stage.

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THE POET IN OUR THEATRE OF TO-DAY

(*Continued from page 9*)

essentially to the classroom and not to the theatre that his plays do not succeed? There is a wide gulf between the two. Albeit he has chosen subjects of warm popular appeal, *Joan of Arc, Washington, The Canterbury Pilgrims,* he has clothed these favorites with a remoteness and intellectuality which seem false to the characters as we know them. Whereas his cold figures may please the students at schools and colleges who are studying well-written verse in the abstract, they are of little value to the stage, a place of emotions, moods, laughter and tears, where human beings should move and tell their tale and, above all else, be human. To his own regret, Mr. MacKaye has never been free to serve an apprenticeship in the theatre, otherwise he might have given us plays of real people, interpreting life as it is.

While MacKaye's *Washington* was failing at Forty-second Street, Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln* was prospering at Forty-eighth Street, and here is an interesting comparison.

First and foremost, John Drinkwater is a writer of verse. Why is it that this poet brought money (and a lot of it, too!) to the box-office? *Abraham Lincoln* was a hit. It was written by an Englishman who had never, until after the play was written, visited America, and yet who gave to America a play about the great President which the American public flocked to see. The American poet wrote, in America, his play about the equally beloved Washington, and it failed. The English poet, far away in his cottage in the Cottswold Hills, wrote of Lincoln, and his play succeeded.

THEATRE RHYTHM

LINCOLN was written without thought of fame for the author. John Drinkwater wrote it because he was in love with his subject. True, it came at a time when all eyes were strained in search of a leader, but John Drinkwater gave a simplicity and directness to his work that coincided with the clear vision of Lincoln and reminded thousands of men and women that ideals were, after all, above all, worth fighting for. Possibly his own life, at that time, had something to do with it. He was strangely unworldly. He was a man of simple tastes, integrity of purpose, loving books and the hills, and writing very seriously whenever time allowed from his duties at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, where he produced and acted in plays for several years, and this may be the secret of his success.

John Drinkwater knows the theatre. He has lived in it, acted in it, produced plays in it. He has sensed audiences night after night, he knows actors, their limitations and their interests, their sensibilities and their responsiveness. Instinctively that knowledge crept into the form of writing as *Lincoln* was being written, hence those gems for actors, the part of the mother who has lost her son and the part of the boy who is about to be shot. Drinkwater has a sense of theatre rhythm, a different rhythm than is required of the printed page, and he learned more through his experience at the Birmingham "Rep" than all the books on dramatic technique and reading the works of the masters could teach him.

POET-ACTORS

SINCE then his *Mary Stuart* and *Robert Lee* have been produced with some success in London and with no success here. These plays were written consciously and almost as "orders," and that is not the way in which Mr. Drinkwater works to achieve his best results. However, the fact remains that within the last twenty-five years, among the writers of verse, only John Drinkwater and the late Stephen Phillips have achieved anything approaching success in the theatre.

Stephen Phillips's powerful dramas, *Ulysses* and *Herod,* were acted by Beerbohm Tree, and *Paolo and Francesca* made a reputation for Henry Ainley. Phillips had been an actor. He was a Bensonian and played with the company that has been the training camp for the best actors of England to-day, and when Stephen Phillips wrote for the theatre he knew a good deal about the theatre.

Therefore, if the poet would become other than an expensive luxury to the manager and a financial risk to the player—his thought and his form of writing verse being more remote than that of either the novelist or the dramatist—he must discard his aloofness and learn to know the theatre first hand.

One poet has written plays that have brought in profits steadily for over three hundred years, a poet of yesterday, to-day and to-morrow—Mr. William Shakespeare. He was an actor. He knew the theatre and loved it. It was his life. He knew his audiences, from monarchs to tramps. That is why the Shakespearian rôles are not difficult to play for any actor who has a voice and knowledge of the difference between blank verse, prose and rhyme. No parts ever written are as effective or as easy to play as *Lady Macbeth* or *Henry V.* And why? A poet who was an actor wrote them!

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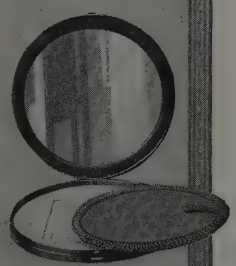

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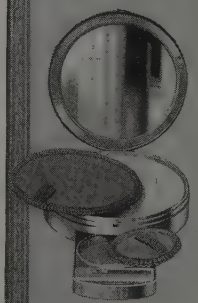

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PLAY OF SEA-LURE CAPTURES LONDON

(*Continued from page* 20)

Repertory is spreading, from Land's End onwards—Oxford has it; Cambridge is to follow; Kew has it, Fulham too; it is no longer the exception; it is going to be a rule. And symmetrically "touring" London smatterings go to the dogs. Let it be so. The provinces should have their own theatrical life, not exist on London facsimiles.

NOTABLE OUTPUT OF PLAYS

NOW as regards the actual output, I have stated it repeatedly and fortified by the opinions of eminent foreigners who make it their life's object to study the drama in many countries, that never has the program of London shown such good fare and such intellectual force as during the last twelve months. There was a time when for a brainy person, not necessarily a high-brow from abroad, it was difficult to find a play in London that was more than mere show, jingle or platitudes. Now, in the autumn, there was a veritable *embarras de richesses*—fine comedies like *The Farmer's Wife, The Mask and the Face,* realism like *Tiger Cats,* criminology in *The Fake,* sexology in *Fata Morgana,* sheer romance in *The Rat,* Shakespeare at the Old Vic, fun and wit in *The Punchbowl* and *Charlot's Revue;* in brief, enough to fill the evenings of the pleasure-seeker as well as the blasé. I dare say that all these plays are very varied quality, that some of them are not "profound" and merely attracting by such impropriety as is beloved of the crowd. But that does not do away with the fact that intellectually they are infinitely superior to the indifferent stuff that post-war *insouciance* and lenient criticism—we were all to blame—foisted on us. And this may be repeated for the benefit of those who are ever on the *qui vive* to trumpet the merits of foreign geese, to the detriment of the modest home-bred swan, that the London plays of to-day—I mean the autumn of 1924—can in the aggregate vie with, nay, excel the program of the same period in Paris. So let's be thankful for what we have and help the good there is by being constructive in criticism and drawing the people to the theatre instead of alienating them by idle croakers—words, words, words that may mean something (at times) but actually do nothing to further the cause.

I always read the obituary announcements in the *Times;* their sorrow makes one think of one's friends. This day (December 29th) it began with Archer, William, author and critic, sixty-eight. It was a shock, for not very long ago I had seen him in the pink of health, speaking with, for him, unwonted enthusiasm about his new play—a West Coast play this time—and of his forthcoming visit to Oslo (formerly Christiania), where Lillabil Ibsen's famous mother was to create *The Green Goddess.*

A GIANT AMONG CRITICS

WHAT I loved about him was his simple way of talking about his progress when urged, for he was reticent about himself and all he did. Now a rich man after years and years of unspeakable toil, despite his fame, he remained as modest as before; his only joy was to entertain lavishly, and now that he could do it well, he did it often. With him goes for me *toute une jeunesse*—for we stood shoulder to shoulder in the revolution of our drama of 1891. He was the giant, the man with the iron features and the golden heart; I was the dwarf with the pluck of Puck. I "enthused" loudly, he glowed within; I stood at the guns, he directed the intelligence. We fought like lions—with Walkley, a super-lion, and Shaw, already a coming power, helping with munition. I got the mud and the wounds. Archer, feared even by Clement Scott, was immune. He did not turn a hair when they attacked him and, by gad! when he hit back, he hit home and left his victim reeling from the thrust of his rapier. For he remained urbane even in anger. His English was always of cathedral-like monumentality—it imposed and awed, if it did not create fervor.

He was a great critic—the greatest critic of England—so long as he was at the *World.* Later the exigencies of life forced him into the daily routine of the ill-fated *Tribune,* and he was too great a thinker to jot down judgment in a hurry. Great he was because he was learned, far-seeing, because he had a cosmopolitan mind; above all, because he was just. He knew on his seat of justice neither friend nor foe. He could be severe, but he was never relentless. For under his reserved Scotch mask beat a warm heart, and praise from him was praise indeed because it sounded genuine like a flawless peal of bells.

VAUDEVILLE

(*Continued from page* 36)

sweet-baby, high-kicking, hot-singing, old-time vaudeville performers come on to do their stuff. Somehow, the legitimate stars do not arise to the occasion either. It may be that they, too, feel that they are out of their element.

And it's the same way with William Courtleigh in *The Good Provider* by the same author of *Fear.* Wonder what his reactions were when he first had this rôle bestowed on him? He must feel silly sitting at a table talking to imaginary guests who should be his wife and daughter.

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THE MEN WHO WRITE THE HITS

(*Continued from page* 12)

hits of the future will be written by good story-tellers with the technique of dramatists, and I think that this condition will prevail in this country for fifty years."

The phone bell rang and Mr. Marcin was invited to attend the opening of a Broadway play, rumored to be exceedingly salacious. He accepted, for he goes to see as many plays as possible.

"The sex plays, those with a lot of swearing and so-called 'real life,' are the hits to-day," he observed as he clicked up the receiver. "The dirty-play cycle is on. The crook and mystery plays come up every four years. Now they are passing. Soon the sex cycle will draw to a close. As soon as these smutty sex plays leave New York, they are failures. We are getting the Continental touch in New York, but this will not reach the rest of the country for one hundred years or more."

Mr. Marcin outlined something of his method of writing a play.

"The idea has probably been developing for a long time," he explained. "Then one day I sit down, close my eyes and start 'writing it.' I watch the characters develop and play their rôles. If it looks good to me on that shadowy stage, I put it on paper. The construction of the play is the difficult thing. I spend most of my time thinking it out, getting the biggest situations I can out of an idea. The story of the play must be the kind which nearly all of us think is very good. It must not be written for the chosen few. The great problem is to hit upon the story with the greatest universal appeal. When I am ready to write the play, I tell the story to friends of mine. If they are amused and entertained by it, I go ahead and write it."

Mr. Marcin believes that his newspaper training gave him the background for play-writing.

"I think that any honest-to-God newspaper man, with the true newspaper instinct, should be able to write a good play. Writing a newspaper story is more or less like writing a play. You select the most dramatic thing first, and then it is a process of elimination. Naturally, much depends on a man's style as a writer. Take the dullest financial theme. One man can whip it into readable material, another will bore the reader with dry facts. A newspaper man learns much of life during his daily work. He knows how people react under great stress, which is dramatic material.

"Every play has its individual problems. For me, every new play is harder to write than the one that went before. This is because I have grown very finicky. I am not so easily satisfied now. After writing plays for a while, you grow less bold and more conservative."

Mr. Marcin confided that the next thing he is going to do will be a novelty in the theatre.

"It will include a different method of writing and a different method of construction," he hinted. "If it is effective, it will be a big hit; if not, it will be terrible. It is to be a comedy drama, but I haven't even decided yet on a title for it."

And, though Mr. Marcin doesn't believe in morals, try to digest this one and ride in your own Renault:

"If you want to write a popular hit, tell an interesting story in an entertaining way."

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THE opening and dedication of the new E. F. Albee Theatre in Brooklyn, on January 19 last, was the culmination and realization of E. F. Albee's long-cherished dream to give the greatest city in the world the most complete and perfect playhouse.

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Rarely in theatrical history has the opening of a theater attracted a more brilliant assemblage. State and city officials, representatives of the Church, personalities of stage and screen, persons prominent in professional life, members of civic organizations, society leaders, all distinguished the event with their presence. Governor Alfred E. Smith and Mayor John F. Hylan officially represented the State of New York and the city.

Cardinal Hayes, Bishop Manning and Rabbi Silverman were among the distinguished guests from the Church.

The new theatre has in its architecture, scientific equipment and decoration all that modern experience could suggest and all of the latest resources of engineering science and invention which have been devised for the safety, comfort and luxury of the theatregoing public. The auditorium, which seats 3,100, is a vision of white and gold and amethyst.

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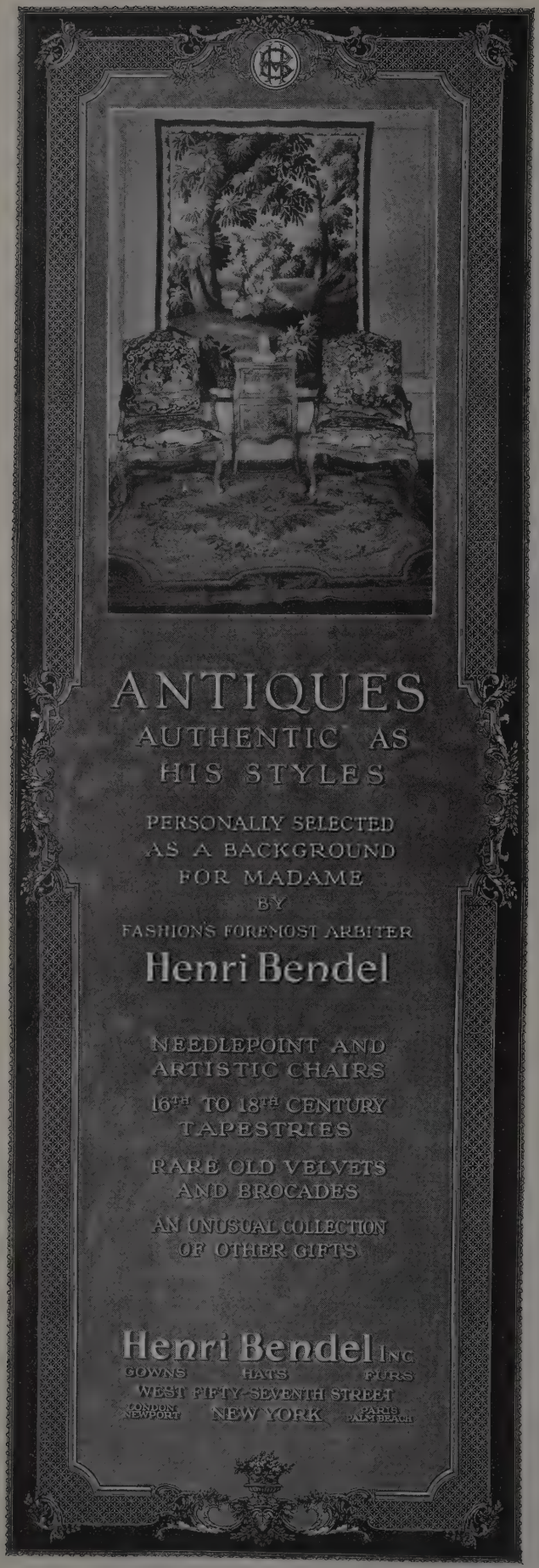


THE VANITY BOX

By ANNE ARCHBALD

WE were in the dressing-room of Vivara, of *The Dream Girl,* the last Saturday matinée before the company departed on tour. That lovely person was talking to us as, helped by her maid, she casually dropped articles into a suitcase.

On the dressing-table was a striking and unusual set of toilet articles, made of something which, as we glanced at it from the corner of our eye, seemed new and yet wore at the same time a strangely familiar air.

As if reading our thought, Vivara responded:

"Are you admiring my Christmas present? And if not, why not? No, but really, isn't the set stunning!"

"Certainly is," we agreed whole-heartedly. "But what are the articles made of? They look like mother-of-pearl, and yet——"

Vivara supplied the information.

"It's that new material, 'Pearloid,'" she said, "made by the people who make the famous Richelieu pearls . . you know!"

But of course . . to be sure! An old friend of ours, "Pearloid." . . We were thrilled to meet it again, having made its acquaintance and lost our heart to it last spring, when it first appeared in the form of compacts—one of which was even then reposing in our bag. . . If you children remember, we wrote about those compacts in The Vanity Box at the time. . . But made up into toilet articles, it looked even richer and more elegant. . . Vivara's set, the regulation mirror and brush and comb and so on, was in soft turquoise blue, and she had a smart initial in sepia, a large "V" on every piece.

"Does it come, do you know, in every color, like the dear little compacts?" we asked.

"Surely," said Vivara, "rose and yellow and lavender, and, of course, the original mother-of-pearl shade, and every shade takes a monogram beautifully. Some of the sets they back with amber, and with the white a colored line is sometimes used around the edge. . . It's all so light, too. . . See, weigh it, . . makes it ideal for traveling."

Having rushed breathlessly into our "Pearloid" story, lest it escape us—and you—may we pause to interpolate, in case you don't already know, that Vivara, in spite of her name, is not Italian. She is English and the great grand-niece of Charles Dickens. And *The Dream Girl* is only her second engagement in this country. She has one of those heavenly waxy-white magnolia petal skins and the most adorable slender figure, with lovely ankles and little feet.

She went on with her packing, apologizing that if she didn't do it beforehand she'd be sure to forget something precious.

"There," she exclaimed suddenly, "I almost did . . my 'Rose Arabia.' . ."

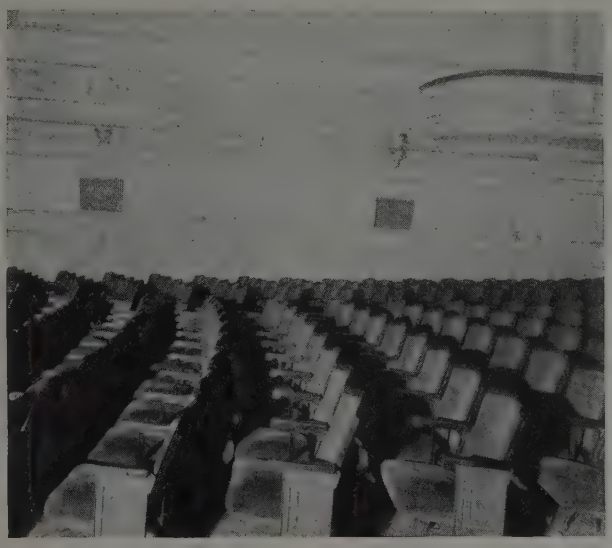
"A perfume or a song?" we inquired.

"Neither," she replied, "unless you might call it both—a song in face creams and a perfume for the skin. I've run out of it and I need a jar for the road. We'll go out together and I'll buy you a jar, and then you can test for yourself how fine the cream is."

Which we did and liked it much. The perfume of roses in its make-up is so rich and strong that it penetrates the pores, and the fragrance clings for hours. And the cream makes the skin like velvet, being equally efficacious for the hands as for the face.

An Oriental beauty preparation, Vivara first discovered it in Italy several years ago, when she was studying there, . . lost track of it when she returned to England, . . and to her joy found it again in New York this winter, where, through the formula brought from the East, it is being manufactured for American women.

For the names of shops where the "Pearloid" toilet articles may be purchased, also for the price of the "Rose Arabia" cream and where that may be bought, write The Vanity Box, care THEATRE MAGAZINE, *2 West 45th Street, New York City.*



THE value and importance of correct theatre seating and the strong influence of comfortable and artistic theatre chairs in winning public favor, have been somewhat overlooked in the past.

There is no doubt, however, but that the tendency in the theatre world in the last few years has been overwhelmingly toward greater and greater luxuriousness in theatre interiors and to more cultural and esthetic refinements in theatre equipment.

This movement has, in fact, become so firmly established as now to be a thing universally accepted by the theatre-going public. Luxury and comfort are now quite taken for granted. The public in its subconscious mind has come to expect elegance, comfort and beauty in the surroundings of the theatre and playhouse, and it cannot be fully satisfied with anything less.

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MR. HORNBLOW GOES TO THE PLAY

(*Continued from page* 19)

of colored singers with excellent voices. This cut would keep the show from lasting until the zero hour as it does at the present time.

Mr. Jolson's chief support comes from Edythe Baker, a nimble dancer, who also knows how to jazz up a piano. A high-kicking, attractive chorus, which is seemingly tireless, adds much of the punch and the up-and-up to this lively new musical comedy.

Mr. Hampden as Othello

Othello. Tragedy by William Shakespeare. Produced by Walter Hampden at the Shubert Theatre January 10, with this cast:

Othello, Walter Hampden; Iago, Baliol Holloway; Cassio, Charles Francis; Brabantio, William Sauter; Roderigo, Reynolds Evans; Montano, Ernest Rowan; Lodovico, Robert Thorne; Gratiano, P. J. Kelly; Duke of Venice, Thomas F. Tracey; Desdemona, Jeannette Sherwin and Mabel Moore; Emilia, Mary Hall; Bianca, Elsie Herndon Kearns.

IF the Governor of North Carolina complained to the Gubernatorial authority of South Carolina that it was a long time between drinks, the Shakespearian enthusiast may well complain that there has been an unconscionable interim between the performances of *Othello* on the local stage. It's some eleven years since the dusky Moor and the super-subtle Venetian clashed here in New York. Faversham was the last Iago, McLean the Othello.

Now comes the ambitious Walter Hampden. With a fine record of financial success in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and anxious to display his quality in the higher and more dramatic flights, Mr. Hampden equips the tragedy with a rich and beautiful investiture—the able output of Claude Bragdon—gathers about him a company, with but a single exception, more distinguished for earnestness of purpose than actual performance and presents *Othello* at the Shubert with a completeness of text that, however gratifying to the student, makes for some tedium. Three solid hours of the best is something too much these nervous and exacting days. The restoration of the Cassio-Bianca scenes may emphasize Othello's credulity, but unless better acted than in the present instance had better remain deleted.

To the modern generation of theatregoers unfamiliar with the great tragic exponents of the past, Mr. Hampden's Othello has been accepted with enthusiastic acclaim. To him happily possessed of memories of Salvini, Booth, McCullough in the rôle, the newcomer's interpretation cannot but prove a disappointment. The palpable playing for points is ever to be deplored, but there are some high lights in Othello which the employment of the traditional brings into the highest relief. The tenderness of the Moor is Hampden's strongest point, but where relentless passion that "knows no retiring ebb" ensues, Mr. Hampden falls down. Where is the dominating note of outraged authority as Othello quells the noisy mob? Where the note of splendid regret as he dismisses Cassio? Where the eloquence of the speech before the Senate? In none of these episodes does Mr. Hampden sound the convincing tone. Always intelligent, earnest and sincere, Mr. Hampden moderately, by his elocution and authority, gives a sound but uninspired rendering of the rôle.

Baliol Holloway's Iago is Shakespearian to the finger tips, an interpretation admirable in its human conception and splendid in its sustained technical virility.

Badges

Comedy drama in three acts by Max Marcin and Edward Hammond. Produced by Jules Hurtig at the Forty-ninth Street Theatre January 5, with the following cast:

Marie Carson, Eleanor Woodruff; Miriam Holt, Madge Kennedy; Franklyn Green, Gregory Kelly; Ed Gillespie, Felix Krembs; Charles Moran, Louis Bennison; Keegan, John Sharkey; Dr. Evans, J. H. Doyle; Asst. House Detective, M. Tello Webb; Chief Postal Inspector, Stephen Wright; Officer Dugan, John Hurley; Smith, Percy Howard.

CROOKS, with hair-trigger guns, amble all over the stage in this Max Marcin-Edward Hammond thriller. Practically every character on the stage is a crook, disguised or boldly admitting that he is a gun-toter of the most dangerous variety. Bad men enter and exit so rapidly, flashing their guns, that when a black cat scampers across the stage it is almost certain that the audience suspects that another crook with a good make-up is scurrying away to a "big job."

The play opens at a fair pace, with a beautiful girl being followed by mysterious men, including a correspondence-course detective. After that everything becomes so complicated that it is impossible to follow the action. All that can be figured out from the mix-up is that there has been a post-office robbery and murder, and that a band of crooks, disguised as post-office inspectors, detectives, policemen and Beau Brummells, are trying to find the hidden loot. It is impossible to figure out at first whether the beautiful girl is the intended victim of a gang of white slavers, a catspaw for the crooks, a crook herself or a detective. The whole show is like a mystery play, with the mystery unsolved even at the drop of the final curtain.

Gregory Kelly, as the correspondence-course, tin-badge detective, with his droll mannerisms and trick vocal inflections, sustains interest all of the time that he is on the stage, which isn't often enough. Madge Kennedy, dainty and charming, adds beauty to the scenes.

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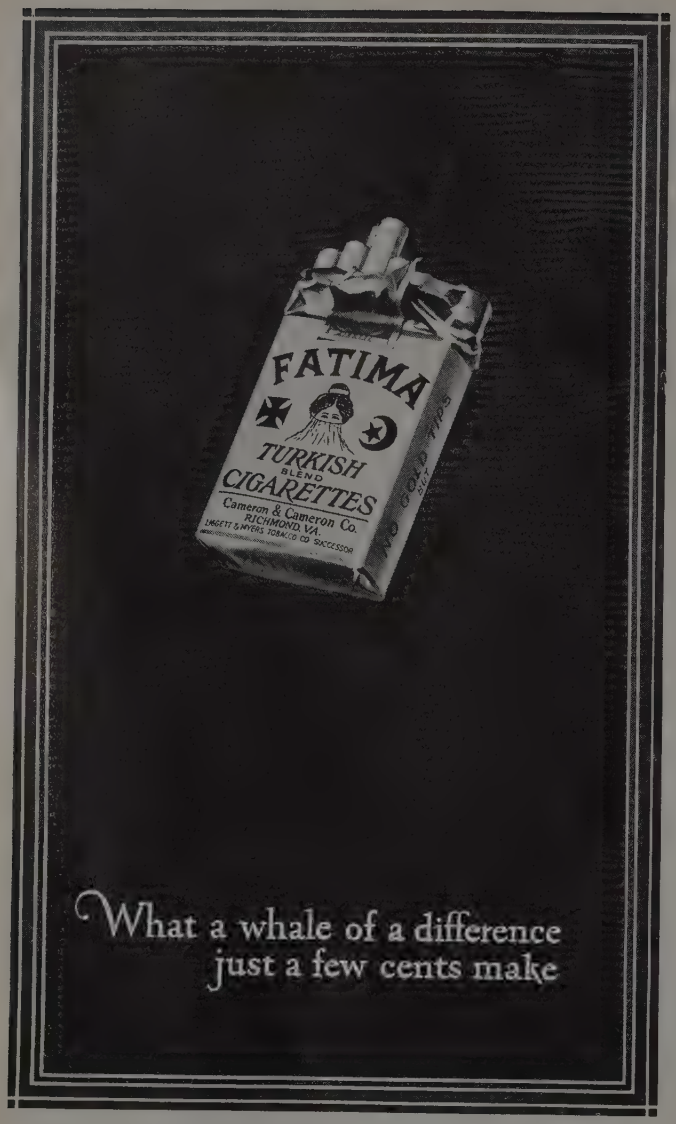

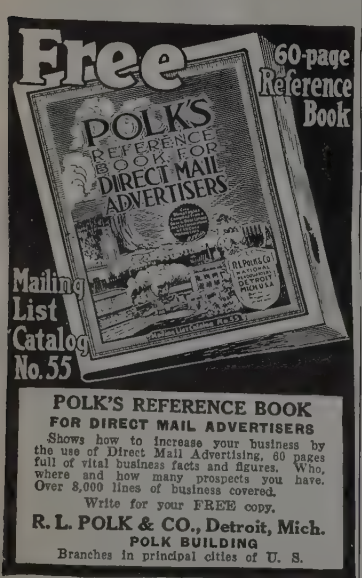

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The Piker

Play in three acts by Leon Gordon. Produced by A. H. Woods at the Eltinge Theatre January 15, with the following cast:

Bernie Kaplan, Lionel Barrymore; Willie Riley, Alan Brooks; Fred Cunningham, Robert Cummings; George Howe, Harry E. McKee; The Waiter, James C. Malaidy; June Knight, Irene Fenwick; Alexander Montgomery, Frank Conroy; Mrs. Cunningham, Adrienne Morrison; Mr. Strong, W. A. Norton; Broderick, Charles Slattery.

SHABBY theatre, shabby play, shabby acting—that is the impression I got of *The Piker,* a crude melodrama of crook life by Leon Gordon in which Lionel Barrymore and his associates were seen recently at the Eltinge. Nor was the *première* rendered any the more enjoyable by the fact that Manager A. H. Woods had forgotten, on a cold night, the little detail of turning on the house steam, thus compelling his guests to sit shivering in furs and overcoats in an inadequately heated auditorium.

The chief interest in the play and the only opportunity it afforded the actor lay in the attempt to reveal the mental processes of a weakling, an ignorant, simple-minded bank runner, a creature so spineless and witless that even when he summons up courage to rob the bank of $50,000, no one will believe he has done it. He gives himself up, but the police only laugh at him. Isn't another man already doing time for the job? The police never make mistakes.

It was his craving for a new suit with two pairs of pants that led to Bernie's undoing. He steals from the teller's cage an envelope he thought held $50. When he discovers it contains $50,000, he is panic-stricken and on the point of making restitution. But his pal, a slick crook who dislikes nothing so much as work, says he'd be a fool not to let it make life easy for both of them. How these two worthies live on the proceeds of the crime, Bernie becoming infatuated with a blonde "skirt" and other crooks, who lose no time in separating him from his money, constitutes the plot.

Lionel Barrymore, adding nothing to his personal appearance by a black wig and Jewish intonation, acted Bernie in a lachrymose, agitated manner that was effective enough for a time, but ended by becoming decidedly monotonous. Mr. Barrymore has allowed himself of late to overdo this "business" of tearful voice and maudlin grimace. It is a habit that, perhaps unconsciously, is growing on him. We had too much of it in *Laugh, Clown, Laugh.* Unless curbed, it might become a bad mannerism.

Alan Brooks played the fellow crook to the life, and Charles Slattery contributed a realistic bit as the headquarters sleuth.

Isabel

Comedy in three acts by Curt Goetz, adapted by Arthur Richman. Produced by Charles Frohman at the Empire Theatre on January 13, with the following cast:

Aunt Olivia, Edna May Oliver; Isabel, Margaret Lawrence; Professor Wilton Shawle, Lyonel Watts; Miteby, A. P. Kaye; Peter Graham, Leslie Howard.

THE problem play has emerged from the shadows and discarded its dark veils and pale, tortured mask. It has learned to frolic in the sunlight, with a blossom over its ear and a bell on its wrists. It slipped lightly into the Empire, calling itself *Isabel,* and it danced there, a merry, sparkling bit of triviality.

Isabel is a delicately phrased paragraph, rather than a play. A bespectacled, frog-dissecting professor, in love with his beautiful wife and his perfect specimens. A good-looking young playwright drawn to the household by the tantalizing memory of an enticing mole on the slightly bored wife's lovely knee. A summer brook and a flowering garden waiting outdoors. A *débonaire* aunt, who points out the advantages of a lover combined with the routine of a husband. From the first line to the final conference of husband and impending lover one knows that the brook and the garden will win as soon as the husband retires to dream about frogs and his wife.

Margaret Lawrence as Isabel was charming. Her comedy, although somewhat artificial, had the airy, joyous quality of a fresh leaf swinging in the wind. Leslie Howard, as the playwright, gave one of those revealing performances which show how much may be at a player's command. In his light moments he was deft, winning and sure. The suave Aunt of Edna May Oliver swept the theatre with its urbane dignity and restrained mockery. Lyonel Watts made the professor real and likable.

Fifteen minutes after the final tinkle of *Isabel,* the curtain rose, showing Margaret Lawrence with a heavier, paler face, and Leslie Howard transformed into a tousle-haired, silly Englishman sitting about a table with eleven other diners. A rustle of applause for the effective setting and the first act of Barrie's unfinished mystery play, *Shall We Join the Ladies,* was under way.

It was Barrie in a new field—clammy hands, nervous, fainting spells, twitching faces, a snapped wineglass—while a peering host watches the guests for a hint of his brother's assassin. As a mystery play it is entirely successful, since everyone is under suspicion after the act is half over—the guests, the butler, the maid and even the host himself. As a casual commentary it needs no second and third act. It requires, however, better players than those who sat tensely in the dim room. It demands a sharpness of contrast and an unblurred conception. There should be twelve guests, different in their possible motives and diverse in their reactions—not just an undefined group of overwrought men and women.

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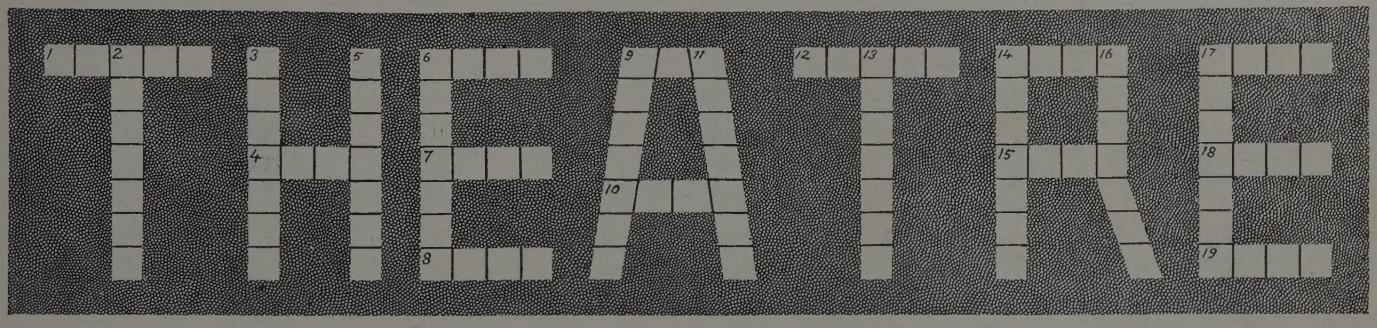
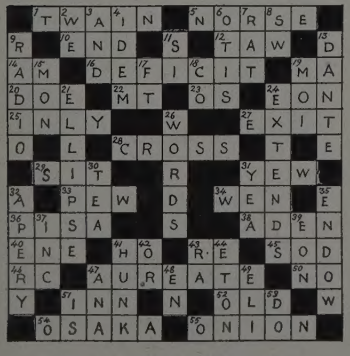
By W. P. SCOTT





Answer to last month's puzzle.

HORIZONTAL

1. He who plays a part.
4. Slang for money.
6. Name of New York theatre.
7. Well-known perfumer.
8. Famous English Shakespearian actor.
9. Prevalent style of hair-dress.
10. Romantic, rollicking stage favorite (given name).
12. An art on which this magazine is an authority.
14. Poet-singer.
15. Close by.
17. Famous opera soprano.
18. A dean of the American stage.
19. Noted screen director (deceased).

VERTICAL

2. Pleasant to go to; pleasant to read.
3. Future theatrical engagement.
5. Necessary to a stage appearance (pl.).
6. Musical performance.
9. Part of theatre interior.
11. Nationally known producer-manager.
13. She, who plays a part.
14. New movie star (made famous by Barrie).
16. Very dear.
17. Popular French actress and singer.

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AMATEUR STAGECRAFT BORDERING ON THE PROFESSIONAL

(*Continued from page* 42)

across the back of the stage and build up a suggestion of deck-house at each side. This also has the advantage of keeping the chorus on shipboard when they make their exits. The solid rail —*à la Bellerophon*—hides the bottom of the cyclorama and masks our trench lights. Some rope mast-stays at either end of the rail, extending up toward the front of the stage, are about the only "atmosphere" we allow ourselves, even simplifying out the beloved life preservers strenuously announcing *Pinafore*. Such liberties as discarding the customary straw color for one serving as a better background for the costumes are also contemplated. We are told that we "oughta do" this or that, but plead lack of time and money, for adversity has its uses. We kill half the border and footlights at each side by screwing them loose, flood the cyclorama with blue light only and reinforce our center front border lights with flood and spot lights carefully masked off the rail, deck-houses and cyclorama, and provide a pictorial background for well-lit action and costuming.

THE setting for *The Road to Yesterday*, the third act of which is shown in the accompanying illustrations, involved an interesting problem. Two acts in a modern studio setting and two in medieval times are united by two transitional scenes. Having no rigging loft in which to hang a drop to form a shallow scene, the transitional scenes had to be set on the stage proper. The back wall of the studio was pierced with a huge window, which formed a small proscenium for the inter-scenes, the sash and glass being raised to disclose the small set. The second act, an inn, was set diagonally for the sake of variety—a deeply recessed fireplace being at the rear. Following the third act was another transitional scene, so that the same window opening as appeared in the first act appeared this time as the opening to a bed in the wall. Drapes pulled over the opening during the act allowed resetting for the following small scene. A change of furniture, fireplace and rearrangement of the openings and the last act—the studio—was again set.

The furniture was studied from authentic examples of the period and executed in soft wood by the property master. The fireplace was built of flat pieces, loose-pin hinged together—as were the door and window reveals. The tapestry, the work of a former art teacher, was executed on burlap and has much of the softness and richness of real tapestry. The pointed door-reveal masks the square-headed opening used with a square reveal for the first and fourth acts.

THE setting of *Dulcy* called for three doors and a stairway of some prominence. Being limited in funds and needing a complete set of Italian Renaissance furniture, it was decided to repaint the *Road to Yesterday* scenery, build a stairway and make the furniture. The large opening seemed ideal for a stairway, a couple of broad steps to what had been the low sill of the studio window starting it off admirably. Considering the style, an iron chair rail seemed advisable. One-inch by two-inch wooden strips, cut in two, made proper wrought-iron balusters. The wrought-iron scrolls were made by nailing ten-penny nails into a broad board in a double row in the shape of the scroll, dipping one-eighth inch thick wall-board in three-quarter-inch strips into steaming hot water and then into black paint, very rich in glue, and winding the strip among the nails. As it dried, the glue hardened and the shape, a perfect scroll, was retained after it was removed from the form.

The leaded glass windows, which proved quite effective, were made of tracing-paper oiled, with the lead lines in India ink, color being given it with lamp dye applied with waste. The furniture was made of soft wood, easily worked—and as easily broken. The upholstering consisted of one-inch by two-inch slats covered with cardboard and excelsior. The cast were disappointed upon trying it, as it belied its apparent comfort. The chest proved to be quite a dignified piece of furniture, in spite of being but one-inch by three-inch wood, moulding and wall-board, and the stencil-board shades of the torchieres gave a rich appearance when lit. The table-lamp was made of plaster by the modeling department and the shade of brown detail paper oiled and stippled with lamp dye. The most expensive thing about the lamp was the electrical part, which required an investment of some fifty cents.

THE lighting units were designed and made at the school, with the exception of the carbon spotlight for the moonlight—which flickered, to the amusement of the initiated in the audience. The regular footlights are so far outside the proscenium that they allow the actors to get outside of the picture, so that portable units are used and a forecloth of the same material as the curtain—a dyed twelve-ounce canton flannel of considerable inexpensive richness—covers the apron.

The border lights used were not those belonging to the building, but especially designed portable sections of three outlets and three circuits each. The one resting on the divan was used as a trench light to illuminate the cut-out outside the French windows. The baby spotlight was designed by one of the students. The entire home-made lighting equipment

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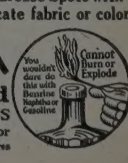

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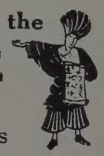

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